SPEECHES AND WRITINGS

OF

SWAMI VIVEKANANDA

A COMPREHENSIVE COLLECTION

WITH FOUR PORTRAITS.

Third Edition: Revised and Enlarged.

PUBLISHED BY

G. A. NATESAN & CO., MADRAS.

PRICE RS. TWO.

BL
1175
V5A55
1899

LIBRARY
OCT [illegible]
UNIVERSITY OF TORONTO

M. L. ... ADVOCATE

PUBLISHERS' NOTE.

This publication is the first of its kind. It is the most exhaustive and comprehensive collection of the works of Swami Vivekananda hitherto published. It contains, among others, his eloquent character sketch of "My Master"; his celebrated lecture at the great Parliament of Religions at Chicago; all the important and valuable speeches, addresses, and discourses delivered in England, America and India on Gnana Yoga, Bhakti Yoga, Karma Yoga, Vedanta, and Hinduism; selections from the eloquent, stirring and inspiring speeches he gave in reply to addresses of welcome that were presented to him at different towns and cities in India during his historic journey from Colombo to Almora, on his return from America; a choice collection of the contributions of the Swami to various papers and periodicals hitherto not available in book form; some of his private letters to friends; and a selection from the beautiful poetry that he wrote in the true spirit of the seer.

The publishers propose to issue at no distant date a companion volume to the present containing a collection of the speeches and writings of the members of the brotherhood of the Ramakrishna Mission, of which the late Swami was so distinguished a representative.

"BE PROUD THAT YOU ARE AN INDIAN."

———:e:———

"Oh India, forget not that your ideal woman is Sita, Savitri, Damayanti; forget not that your ideal god is the great ascetic of ascetics, Umanath Sankar; forget not that your marriage, your wealth, your life are not for your sense-enjoyment,—are not for your individual personal pleasure; forget not that from your very birth, you are sacrificed for the Mother. * * * Thou Hero, take courage, be proud that you are an Indian,—say, in pride, "I am an Indian, every Indian is my brother," say, "the ignorant Indian, the poor Indian, the Brahman Indian, the Pariah Indian, is my brother"; be clad in torn rags and say, in pride, at the top of your voice, "The Indians are my brothers,—the Indians are my life, India's god and goddess are my God, India's society is the cradle of my childhood, the pleasure garden of my youth, the sacred seclusion of my old age"; say, brother,—"India's soil is my highest heaven, India's good is my good," and, pray day and night, "Thou Lord, Thou Mother of the Universe, Vouchsafe manliness unto me,—Thou Mother of strength, Take away my unmanliness and make me man."

Vivekananda.

PREFACE.

The following pages are the result of an attempt on the part of the publishers to bring together in a collected form all that is valuable and of abiding interest in the speeches and writings of the late Swami Vivekananda. The Swami came to public notice almost suddenly at the great Parliament of Religions held at Chicago in the year 1895. The Indian public followed with great interest his brief but memorable career during the few short years that he lived after that great gathering. He preached the religion of his Master in America and in England and afterwards in the land of his birth. The last, but not the least, of the Sages of India, Ramakrishna Paramahamsa, the Saint of Dakshineswar, was the prophet of a universal religion which found adequate utterance from the lips of his great disciple Swami Vivekananda. The collected works of the Swami cover the whole field of Hindu Religion and Philosophy and present to the Western world, in a lucid and attractive form, the abstruse doctrines of Eastern Religious Philosophy. To the Eastern reader, they present in a handy compass much that can only be gleaned from ponderous tomes, after infinite research. The necessarily scattered nature of the addresses and writings involves some repetition, but the publishers have felt constrained to overlook such repetition—even at the risk of adding largely to this volume—in the conviction that the seeker after truth would welcome the diversified forms of presentation, now under the guise of an allegory, and now of a beautiful simile or metaphor, but always conveying the intensity of the author's conviction in the profound truths to which he

was giving expression. He travelled through various cities in America, in England and in India, delivering addresses and sometimes a course of lectures or again holding classes where he discoursed on a multitude of topics in response to numerous inquiries after truth. To his countrymen his speeches were a trumpet call to duty. To use one of his own familiar phrases, he preached in Gita fashion exhorting them to cast off the customs and superstitions of degenerate days and to rise to the grand and noble conception of the Upanishadic divinity of man. In active or contemplative life he preached strength, courage and nobility of character. He was full of the consciousness of a great mission, while whatever he spoke was an offering to the service of his Master.

Fellow-workers in the same field are continuing his labours in the remotest parts of the world, preaching the eternal religion of the saints of India.

His admirers might be numbered by thousands. To his fellow-workers, to the Indian public and to the many followers of the Swami in England and America, this first publication of a comprehensive and fairly exhaustive collection of his speeches and writings will, it is believed, be a valuable possession and an abiding source of inspiration and hope.

CONTENTS.

My Master	1
Hinduism as a Religion	31
Addresses of Congratulations from Madras and Calcutta	52
Karma-Yoga	76
Metaphysics in India: Reincarnation	96
Immortality	112
Is the Soul Immortal?	126
The Freedom of the Soul	131
Maya and Illusion	148
Maya and the Conception of God	169
Maya and Freedom	184
The Real and the Apparent Man	197
The Absolute and Manifestation	217
Unity in Diversity	234
The Cosmos: The Macrocosm	250
The Cosmos: The Microcosm	262
Realization	279
The Ideal of a Universal Religion	303
God in Everything	326
Bhakti or Devotion	339
Vedanta	358
The Vedanta in its Application to Indian Life	402
The Mission of the Vedanta	424
The Sages of India	449
Christ, the Messenger	472
The Relation of Buddhism to Hinduism	489
The Ramayana	492

The Mahabharata 506
Sannyas: Its Ideal and Practice 523
What Have I Learnt? 526
The Religion we are Born in.. 531
The True Method of Social Reform 540
The Reform of Caste 548
Education on National Lines 556
The Conquest of the World by Indian Thought .. 560
The Himalayas 565
Dr. Paul Deussen 568
Max Muller—A Vedantist 574
An appeal to Indians 577
Work and its Secret.. 583
Japan 593

POEMS.

Song of the Sanyasin 595
To a Friend 599
The Hymn of Creation 603
"And Let Shyama Dance There" 605
To the Awakened India 610
Kali the Mother 612
Hold on Yet a While, Brave Heart 613
Nirvanashatkam, or Six Stanzas on Nirvana .. 614
A Hymn to the Divinity of Sri Ramakrishna .. 616
The Hymn of Samadhi 619
Angels Unawares 620
Requiescat in Pace 623
Peace 624

MY MASTER.*

ADVOCATE.

"WHENEVER virtue subsides and vice prevails, I come down to help mankind," declares Krishna in the Bhagavad Gitâ. Whenever this world of ours, on account of growth, on account of added circumstances, requires a new adjustment, a wave of power comes, and as man is acting on two planes, the spiritual and the material, waves of adjustment come on both planes. On the one side, of adjustment on the material plane, Europe has mainly been the basis during modern times, and of the adjustment on the other, the spiritual plane, Asia has been the basis throughout the history of the world. To-day, man requires one more adjustment on the spiritual plane; to-day, when material ideas are at the height of their glory and power; to-day, when man is likely to forget his divine nature, through his growing dependence on matter, and is likely to be reduced to a mere money-making machine, an adjustment is necessary, and the power is coming, the voice has spoken, to drive away the clouds of gathering materialism. The power has been set in motion which, at no distant date, will bring unto mankind once more the memory of their real nature, and again the place from which this power will start will be Asia. This world of ours is on the plan of the division of labour. It is vain to say that one man shall possess everything. Yet how

* Lecture delivered at New York under the auspices of the Vedanta Society.

childish we are! The baby in his childishness thinks that his doll is the only possession that is to be coveted in this whole universe. So a nation which is great in the possession of material powers thinks that that is all that is to be coveted, that that is all that is meant by progress, that that is all that is meant by civilization, and if there are other nations which do not care to possess, and do not possess these powers, they are not fit to live, their whole existence is useless. On the other hand, another nation may think that mere material civilization is utterly useless. From the Orient came the voice which once told the world that, if a man possess everything that is under the sun or above it, and does not possess spirituality, what matters it? This is the Oriental type, the other is the Occidental type.

Each of these types has its grandeur, each has its glory. The present adjustment will be the harmonizing, the mingling of these two ideals. To the Oriental, the world of spirit is as real as to the Occidental is the world of senses. In the spiritual, the Oriental finds everything he wants or hopes for; in it he finds all that makes life real to him. To the Occidental he is a dreamer; to the Oriental, the Occidental is a dreamer, playing with dolls of five minutes, and he laughs to think that grown-up men and women should make so much of a handful of matter which they will have to leave sooner or later. Each calls the other a dreamer. But the Oriental ideal is as necessary for the progress of the human race as is the Occidental, and I think it is more necessary. Machines never made mankind happy, and never will make. He who is trying to make us believe this, will claim that happiness is in the machine, but it is always in the mind.

It is the man who is lord of his mind who alone can become happy, and none else. But what, after all, is this power of machinery? Why should a man who can send a current of electricity through a wire be called a very great man, and a very intelligent man? Does not Nature do a million times more than that every moment? Why not then fall down and worship Nature? What matters it if you have power over the whole of the world, if you have mastered every atom in the universe? That will not make you happy unless you have the power of happiness in yourself, until you have conquered yourself. Man is born to conquer Nature, it is true, but the Occidental means by "Nature" only the physical or external nature. It is true that external nature is majestic, with its mountains, and oceans, and rivers, and with its infinite powers and varieties. Yet there is a more majestic internal nature of man, higher than the sun, moon and stars, higher than this earth of ours, higher than the physical universe, transcending these little lives of ours; and it affords another field of study. There the Orientals excel, just as the Occidentals excel in the other. Therefore it is fitting that, whenever there is a spiritual adjustment, it should come from the Orient. It is also fitting that, when the Oriental wants to learn about machine-making, he should sit at the feet of the Occidental and learn from him. When the Occident wants to learn about the spirit, about God, about the soul, about the meaning and the mystery of this universe, she must sit at the feet of the Orient to learn.

I am going to present before you the life of one man who has been the mover of such a wave in India. But before going into the life of this man, I will try to present

before you the secret of India, what India means. If those whose eyes have been blinded by the glamour of material things, whose whole dedication of life is to eating and drinking and enjoying, whose whole ideal of possession is lands and gold, whose whole ideal of pleasure is in the sensations, whose god is money, and whose goal is a life of ease and comfort in this world, and death after that, whose minds never look forward, and who rarely think of anything higher than the sense objects in the midst of which they live, if such as these go to India, what do they see? Poverty, squalor, superstition, darkness, hideousness everywhere. Why? Because in their minds enlightenment means dress, education, social politeness. Whereas Occidental nations have used every effort to improve their material position, India has done differently. There lives the only race in the world which, in the whole history of humanity, never went beyond their frontiers to conquer anyone, who never coveted that which belonged to anyone else, and whose only fault was that their lands were so fertile, and their wits so keen, that they accumulated wealth by the hard labour of their hands, and so tempted other nations to come and despoil them. They are contented to be despoiled, and to be called barbarians, and in return they want to send to this world visions of the Supreme, to lay bare for the world the secrets of human nature, to rend the veil that conceals the real man, because they know the dream, because they know that behind this materialism lives the real divine nature of man which no sin can tarnish, no crime can spoil, no lust can kill, which the fire cannot burn, nor the water wet, which heat cannot dry, nor death kill, and to them this true nature of man is as real as is any material object to the

senses of an Occidental. Just as you are brave to jump at the mouth of a cannon with a hurrah; just as you are brave in the name of patriotism to stand up and give up your lives for your country, so are they brave in the name of God. There it is that when a man declares that this is a world of ideas, that it is all a dream, he casts off clothes and property to demonstrate that what he believes and thinks is true. There it is that a man sits on the banks of a river, when he has known that life is eternal, and wants to give up his body just as nothing, just as you can give up a bit of straw. Therein lies their heroism, ready to face death as a brother, because they are convinced that there is no death for them. Therein lies the strength that has made them invincible through hundreds of years of oppression and foreign invasions, and foreign tyranny. The nation lives to-day, and in that nation, even in the days of the direst disaster, spiritual giants have never failed to arise. Asia produces giants in spirituality just as the Occident produces giants in politics, giants in science. In the beginning of the present century, when Western influence began to pour into India, when Western conquerors, with sword in hand, came to demonstrate to the children of the sages that they were mere barbarians, a race of dreamers, that their religion was but mythology, and God and soul and everything they had been struggling for were mere words without meaning, that the thousands of years of struggle, the thousands of years of endless renunciation, had all been in vain, the question began to be agitated among young men at the universities whether the whole national existence up to this date had been a failure, if they must begin anew on the Occidental plan, tear up their old books, burn their

philosophies, drive away their preachers, and break down their temples.

Did not the Occidental conqueror, the man who demonstrated his religion with sword and gun, say that all the old ways were mere superstition and idolatry? Children brought up and educated in the new schools started on the Occidental plan, drank in these ideas from their childhood and it is not to be wondered at that doubts arose. But instead of throwing away superstition and making a real search after truth, the test of truth became "What does the West say?" The priest must go, the Vedas must be burned, because the West has said so. Out of the feeling of unrest thus produced, there arose a wave of so-called reform in India.

If you wish to be a true reformer, three things are necessary. The first is to feel; do you really feel for your brothers? Do you really feel that there is so much misery in the world, so much ignorance and superstition? Do you really feel that men are your brothers? Does this idea come into your whole being? Does it run in your blood? Does it tingle in your veins? Does it course through every nerve and filament of your body? Are you full of that idea of sympathy? If you are, that is only the first step. You must think next if you have found any remedy. The old ideas may be all superstition, but in and around these masses of superstition are nuggets of gold and truth. Have you discovered means by which to keep that gold alone, without any of the dross? If you have done that, that is only the second step, one more thing is necessary. What is your motive? Are you sure that you are not actuated by greed for gold, by thirst for fame, or power? Are you really sure that you can stand to your ideals, and

work on, even if the whole world wants to crush you down? Are you sure you know what you want, and will perform your duty, and that alone, even if your life is at stake? Are you sure that you will persevere so long as life endures, so long as one pulsation in the heart will last? Then you are a real reformer, you are a teacher, a master, a blessing to mankind! But man is so impatient, so short-sighted! He has not the patience to wait, he has not the power to see. He wants to rule, he wants results immediately. Why? He wants to reap the fruits himself, and does not really care for others. Duty for duty's sake is not what he wants. "To work you have the right, but not to the fruits thereof," says Krishna. Why cling to results? Ours are the duties. Let the fruits take care of themselves. But man has no patience, he takes up any scheme and the larger number of would-be reformers all over the world, can be classed under this heading.

As I have said, the idea of reform came to India when it seemed as if the wave of materialism that had invaded her shores would sweep away the teachings of the sages. But the nation had borne the shocks of a thousand such waves of change. This one was mild in comparison. Wave after wave had flooded the land, breaking and crushing everything for hundreds of years; the sword had flashed, and "Victory unto Allah" had rent the skies of India, but these floods subsided, leaving the national ideals unchanged.

The Indian nation cannot be killed. Deathless it stands and it will stand so long as that spirit shall remain as the background, so long as her people do not give up their spirituality. Beggars they may remain, poor and poverty-stricken; dirt and squalor may surround them perhaps

throughout all time, but let them not give up their God, let them not forget that they are the children of the sages. Just as in the West even the man in the street wants to trace his descent from some robber-baron of the Middle Ages, so in India even an Emperor on the throne wants to trace his descent from some beggar-sage in the forest, from a man who wore the bark of a tree, lived upon the fruits of the forest and communed with God. That is the type of descent we want, and while holiness is thus supremely venerated, India cannot die.

It was while reforms of various kinds were being inaugurated in India, that a child was born of poor Brahmin parents on the 20th of February, 1835, in one of the remote villages of Bengal. The father and mother were very orthodox people. The life of a really orthodox Brahmin is one of continuous renunciation. Very few things can he do, and over and beyond them the orthodox Brahmin must not occupy himself with any secular business. At the same time he must not receive gifts from everybody. You may imagine how rigorous that life becomes. You have heard of the Brahmins and their priestcraft many times, but very few of you have ever stopped to ask what makes this wonderful band of men the rulers of their fellows. They are the poorest of all the classes in the country, and the secret of their power lies in their renunciation. They never covet wealth. Theirs is the poorest priesthood in the world, and, therefore, the most powerful. Even in this poverty, a Brahmin's wife will never allow a poor man to pass through the village without giving him something to eat. That is considered the highest duty of the mother in India; and because she is the mother it is her duty to be served last; she must see

that everyone is served before her turn comes. That is why the mother is regarded as God in India. This particular woman, the mother of our present subject, was the very type of a Hindu mother. The higher the caste, the greater the restrictions. The lowest caste people can eat and drink anything they like, but as men rise in the social scale more and more restrictions come, and when they reach the highest caste, the Brahmin, the hereditary priesthood of India, their lives, as I have said, are very much circumscribed. Compared to Western manners their lives are of continuous asceticism. But they have great steadiness; when they get hold of an idea they carry it out to its very conclusion, and they keep hold of it generation after generation until they make something out of it. Once give them an idea and it is not easy to take it back again, but it is hard to make them grasp a new idea.

The orthodox Hindus, therefore, are very exclusive, living entirely within their own horizon of thought and feeling. Their lives are laid down in our old books in every little detail, and the least detail is grasped with almost adamantine firmness by them. They would starve rather than eat a meal cooked by the hands of a man not belonging to their own small section of caste. But withal they have intensity and tremendous earnestness. That force of intense faith and religious life occurs often among the orthodox Hindus, because their very orthodoxy comes from the tremendous conviction that it is right. We may not all think that that to which they hold on with such perseverance is right, but to them it is. Now it is written in our books that a man should always be charitable even to the extreme. If a man starves himself to death to help another man, to save that man's life, it is all right; it is

even held that a man ought to do that. And it is expected of a Brahmin to carry this idea out to the very extreme. Those who are acquainted with the literature of India will remember a beautiful old story about this extreme charity, how a whole family, as related in the Mahabharata, starved themselves to death and gave their last meal to a beggar. This is not an exaggeration, for such things still exist. The characters of the father and mother of my Master were very much like that. Very poor they were and yet many a time the mother would starve herself a whole day to help a poor man. Of them this child was born and he was a peculiar child from very babyhood. He remembered his past from his birth, and was conscious for what purpose he came into the world, and every power was devoted to the fulfilment of that purpose. While he was quite young his father died and the boy was sent to school. A Brahmin's boy must go to school; the caste restricts him to a learned profession only. The old system of education in India, still prevalent in many parts of the country, especially in connection with Sannyasins, was very different from the modern system. The students had not to pay. It was thought that knowledge is so sacred that no man ought to sell it. Knowledge must be given freely and without any price. The teachers used to take students without charge, and not only so, but most of them gave their students food and clothes. To support these teachers the wealthy families on certain occasions, such as a marriage festival, or at the ceremonies for the dead, made gifts to them. They were considered the first and foremost claimants to certain gifts, and they, in their turn, had to maintain their students. This boy about whom I am speaking had an elder brother, a learned

professor, and went to study with him. After a short time the boy became convinced that the aim of all secular learning was mere material advancement, and he resolved to give up study and devote himself to the pursuit of spiritual knowledge. The father being dead, the family was very poor, and this boy had to make his own living. He went to a place near Calcutta and became a temple priest. To become a temple priest is thought very degrading to a Brahmin. Our temples are not churches, in your sense of the word, they are not places for public worship, for, properly speaking, there is no such thing as public worship in India. Temples are erected mostly by rich persons as a meritorious religious act.

If a man has much property, he wants to build a temple. In that he puts a symbol or an image of an Incarnation of God, and dedicates it to worship in the name of God. The worship is akin to that which is conducted in Roman Catholic churches, very much like the Mass, reading certain sentences from the Sacred Books, waving a light before the image, and treating the image in every respect as we treat a great man. This is all that is done in the temple. The man who goes to a temple is not considered thereby a better man than he who never goes. More properly the latter is considered the more religious man, for religion in India is to each man his own private affair and all his worship is conducted in the privacy of his own home. It has been held from the most ancient times in our country that it is a degenerating occupation to become a temple priest. There is another idea behind it, that, just as with education, but in a far more intense sense with religion, the fact that temple priests take fees for their work is making merchandise of sacred things. So you may imagine

the feelings of that boy when he was forced through poverty to take up the only occupation open to him,—that of a temple priest.

There have been various poets in Bengal whose songs have passed down to the people; they are sung in the streets of Calcutta and in every village. Most of these are religious songs, and their one central idea, which is perhaps peculiar to the religions of India, is the idea of realization. There is not a book in India on religion which does not breathe this idea. Man must realize God, feel God, see God, talk to God. That is religion. The Indian atmosphere is full of stories of saintly persons having visions of God. Such doctrines form the basis of their religion; and all these ancient books and scriptures are the writings of persons who came into direct contact with spiritual facts. These books were not written for the intellect, nor can any reasoning understand them because they have been written by men who have seen things of which they write, and they can be understood only by men who have raised themselves to the same height. They say there is such a thing as realization even in this life, and it is open to everyone, and religion begins with the opening of this faculty, if I may call it so. This is the central idea in all religions and this is why we may find one man with the most finished oratorical powers, or the most convincing logic, preaching the highest doctrines and yet unable to get people to listen to him; and another, a poor man, who scarcely can speak the language of his own motherland, yet with half the nation worshipping him in his own life-time as God. The idea somehow or other has got abroad that he has raised himself to that state of realization, that religion is no more a matter of conjecture to

him, that he is no more groping in the dark on such momentous questions as religion, the immortality of the soul, and God; and people come from all quarters to see him and gradually they begin to worship him as an Incarnation of God.

In the temple was an image of the "Blissful Mother." This boy had to conduct the worship morning and evening and by and by this one idea filled his mind,—"Is there anything behind this Image? Is it true that there is a Mother of Bliss in the universe? Is it true that she lives and guides this universe, or is it all a dream? Is there any reality in religion?" This scepticism comes to almost every Hindu child. It is the standing scepticism of our country—is this that we are doing real? And theories will not satisfy us, although there are ready at hand almost all the theories that have ever been made with regard to God and soul. Neither books nor theories can satisfy us, the one idea that gets hold of thousands of our people is this idea of realization. Is it true that there is a God? If it be true, can I see Him? Can I realize the truth? The Western mind may think all this very impracticable, but to us it is intensely practical. For this idea men will give up their lives. For this idea thousands of Hindus every year give up their homes and many of them die through the hardships they have to undergo. To the Western mind this must seem most visionary, and I can see the reason for this point of view. But after years of residence in the West, I still think this idea the most practical thing in life.

Life is but momentary whether you are a toiler in the streets, or an Emperor ruling millions. Life is but momentary, whether you have the best of health or the

worst. There is but one solution of life, says the Hindu, and that solution is what they call God and Religion. If these be true, life becomes explained, life becomes bearable, becomes enjoyable. Otherwise, life is but a useless burden. That is our idea, but no amount of reasoning can demonstrate it; it can only make it probable, and there it rests. Facts are only in the senses and we have to sense Religion to demonstrate it to ourselves. We have to sense God to be convinced that there is a God. Nothing but our own perceptions can make these things real to us.

This idea took possession of the boy and his whole life became concentrated upon that. Day after day he would weep and say: "Mother, is it true that Thou existest, or is it all poetry? Is the Blissful Mother an imagination of poets and misguided people, or is there such a reality?" We have seen that of books, of education in our sense of the word, he had none and so much the more natural, so much the more healthy was his mind, so much the purer his thoughts, undiluted by drinking in the thoughts of others. This thought which was uppermost in his mind gained in strength every day until he could think of nothing else. He could no more conduct the worship properly, could no more attend to the various details in all their minuteness. Often he would forget to place the food offering before the image, sometimes he would forget to wave the light, at other times he would wave the light a whole day, and forget everything else. At last it became impossible for him to serve in the temple. He left it and entered into a little wood that was near and lived there. About this part of his life he has told me many times that he could not tell when the sun rose or set, nor how he lived. He lost all thought of himself and forgot to eat.

During this period he was lovingly watched over by a relative who put into his mouth food which he mechanically swallowed.

Days and nights thus passed with the boy. When a whole day would pass, towards evening, when the peals of bells in the temples would reach the forest, the chimes, and the voices of the persons singing, it would make the boy very sad, and he would cry: "One day is gone in vain, Mother, and Thou dost not come. One day of this short life has gone and I have not known the Truth." In the agony of his soul, sometimes he would rub his face against the ground and weep.

This is the tremendous thirst that seizes the human heart. Later on, this very man said to me: "My child, suppose there is a bag of gold in one room, and a robber in the room next to it, do you think that robber can sleep? He cannot. His mind will be always thinking how to get into that room and get possession of that gold. Do you think then that a man firmly persuaded that there is a reality behind all these sensations, that there is a God, that there is One who never dies, One that is the infinite amount of all bliss, a bliss compared to which these pleasures of the senses are simply playthings, can rest contented without struggling to attain it? Can he cease his efforts for a moment? No. He will become mad with longing." This divine madness seized this boy. At that time he had no teacher; nobody to tell him anything except that everyone thought that he was out of his mind. This is the ordinary condition of things. If a man throws aside the vanities of the world we hear him called mad, but such men are the salt of the earth. Out of such madness have come the powers that have moved this world of ours, and out of such

madness alone will come the powers of the future, that are going to be in the world. So days, weeks, months passed in continuous struggle of the soul to arrive at Truth. The boy began to see visions, to see wonderful things, the secrets of his nature were beginning to open to him. Veil after veil was, as it were, being taken off. Mother Herself became the teacher, and initiated the boy into the truths he sought. At this time there came to this place a woman, beautiful to look at, learned beyond compare. Later on this Saint used to say about her that she was not learned, but was the embodiment of learning; she was learning itself, in human form. There, too, you find the peculiarity of the Indian nation. In the midst of the ignorance in which the average Hindu woman lives, in the midst of what is called in western countries her lack of freedom, there could arise a woman of this supreme spirituality. She was a Sannyasini, for women also give up the world, throw away their property, do not marry, and devote themselves to the worship of the Lord. She came, and when she heard of this boy in the forest she offered to go to see him, and here was the first help he received. At once she recognized what his trouble was, and she said to him: "My son, blessed is the man upon whom such madness comes. The whole of this universe is mad; some for wealth, some for pleasure, some for fame, some for a hundred other things. Blessed is the man who is mad after God. Such men are very few." This woman remained near the boy for years, taught him the forms of the religions of India, initiated him in the different practices of Yoga, and, as it were, guided and brought into harmony this tremendous river of spirituality.

Later there came to the same forest, a Sannyasin, one of the beggar-friars of India, a learned man, a philosopher. He was a peculiar man, he was an idealist. He did not believe that this world existed in reality, and to demonstrate that he would never go under a roof, he would always live out of doors, in storm and sunshine alike. This man began to teach the boy the philosophy of the Vedas, and he found very soon, to his astonishment, that the pupil was in some respects wiser than the master. He spent several months there with the boy, after which he initiated him into the order of Sannyasins and took his departure.

The relatives of this boy thought that his madness could be cured if they could get him married. Sometimes in India young children are married by their parents and relatives without giving their own consent in the matter. This boy had been married at the age of about eighteen to a little girl of five. Of course, such a marriage is but a betrothal. The real marriage takes place when the wife grows older, when it is customary for the husband to go and bring his bride to his own home. In this case, however, the husband had entirely forgotten he had a wife. In her far-off home the girl had heard that her husband had become a religious enthusiast and that he was even considered insane by many. She resolved to learn the truth for herself, so she set out and walked to the place where her husband was. When at last she stood in her husband's presence, he at once admitted her right to his life; although in India any person, man or woman, who embraces a religious life is thereby freed from all other obligations. The young man fell at the feet of his wife and said: "I have learned to look upon every woman as mother, but I am at your service."

The maiden was a pure and noble soul, and was able to understand her husband's aspirations and sympathize with them. She quickly told him that she had no wish to drag him down to a life of worldliness; but that all she desired was to remain near him, to serve him, and to learn of him. She became one of his most devoted disciples, always revering him as a divine being. Thus through his wife's consent the last barrier was removed and he was free to lead the life he had chosen.

The next desire that seized upon the soul of this man was to know the truth about the various religions. Up to that time he had not known any religion but his own. He wanted to understand what other religions were like. So he sought teachers of other religions. By teachers you must always remember what we mean in India—not a bookworm, but a man of realization, one who knows truth at first-hand and not centuries after. He found a Mohammedan Saint and went to live with him; he underwent the disciplines prescribed by him, and, to his astonishment, found that when faithfully carried out, these devotional methods led him to the same goal he had already attained. He gathered similar experience from following the true religion of Jesus Christ. He went to the various sects existing in our country that were available to him, and whatever he took up he went into it with his whole heart. He did exactly as he was told, and in every instance he arrived at the same result. Thus from actual experience he came to know that the goal of every religion is the same, that each is trying to teach the same thing, the difference being largely in method, and still more in language. At the core, all sects and all religions have the same aim.

Then came to him the conviction that to be perfect,

the sex idea must go, because soul has no sex, soul is neither male nor female. It is only in the body that sex exists, and the man who desires to reach the spirit cannot, at the same time, hold to sex distinctions. Having been born in a masculine body, this man now wanted to bring the feminine idea into everything. He began to think that he was a woman, he dressed like a woman, spoke like a woman, gave up the occupations of men, and lived among the women of his own family, until, after years of this discipline, his mind became changed, and he entirely forgot the idea of sex; all thought of that vanished and the whole view of life became changed to him.

We hear in the West about worshipping woman, but this is usually for her youth and beauty. This man meant by worshipping woman, that to him every woman's face was that of the Blissful Mother, and nothing but that. I myself have seen this man standing before those women whom society would not touch, and falling at their feet bathed in tears, saying: "Mother, in one form Thou art in the street, and in another form Thou art the universe. I salute Thee, Mother, I salute Thee." Think of the blessedness of that life from which all carnality has vanished, when every woman's face has become transfigured, and only the face of the Divine Mother, the Blissful One, the Protectress of the human race shines upon the man who can look upon every woman with that love and reverence! That is what we want. Do you mean to say that the divinity behind every woman can ever be cheated? It never was and never will be. Unconsciously it asserts itself. Unfailingly it detects fraud, it detects hypocrisy, unerringly it feels the warmth of truth, the light of spirituality, the holiness of purity. Such purity is absolutely necessary if real spirituality is to be attained.

This rigorous, unsullied purity came into the life of that man; all the struggles which we have in our lives were past for him. His hard-earned jewels of spirituality, for which he had given three-quarters of his life, were now ready to be given to humanity, and then began his mission. His teaching and preaching were peculiar, he would never take the position of a teacher. In our country a teacher is a most highly venerated person, he is regarded as God Himself. We have not even the same respect for our father and mother. Father and mother give us our body, but the teacher shows us the way to salvation. We are his children, we are born in the spiritual line of the teacher. All Hindus come to pay respect to an extraordinary teacher, they crowd around him. And here was such a teacher, but the teacher had no thought whether he was to be respected or not, he had not the least idea that he was a great teacher, he thought that it was Mother who was doing everything and not he. He always said: "If any good comes from my lips, it is the Mother who speaks; what have I to do with it?" That was his one idea about his work, and to the day of his death he never gave it up. This man sought no one. His principle was, first form character, first earn spirituality, and results will come of themselves. His favourite illustration was, "When the lotus opens, the bees come of their own accord to seek the honey, so let the lotus of your character be full-blown and the results will follow." This is a great lesson to learn. My Master taught me this lesson hundreds of times, yet I often forget it. Few understand the power of thought. If a man goes into a cave, shuts himself in, and thinks one really great thought and dies, that thought will penetrate the adamantine walls of that cave, vibrate through space, and at last penetrate the whole human race.

Such is the power of thought; be in no hurry, therefore, to give your thoughts to others. First have something to give. He alone teaches who has something to give, for teaching is not talking, teaching is not imparting doctrines, it is communicating. Spirituality can be communicated just as really as I can give you a flower. This is true in the most literal sense. This idea is very old in India and finds illustration in the West in the belief in the theory of apostolic succession. Therefore, first make character—that is the highest duty you can perform. Know Truth for yourself, and there will be many to whom you can teach it afterwards; they will all come. This was the attitude of my Master—he criticised no one.

For years I lived with that man, but never did I hear those lips utter one word of condemnation for any sect. He had the same sympathy for all of them; he had found the harmony between them. A man may be intellectual, or devotional, or mystic, or active, and the various religions represent one or the other of these types. Yet it is possible to combine all the four in one man, and this is what future humanity is going to do. That was his idea. He condemned no one, but saw the good in all.

People came by thousands to see this wonderful man, to hear him speak in a patois, every word of which was forceful and instinct with light. For it is not what is spoken, much less the language in which it is spoken, it is the personality of the speaker which dwells in everything he says that carries weight. Every one of us feels this at times. We hear most splendid orations, most wonderfully reasoned out discourses, and we go home and forget it all. All other times we hear a few words in the simplest of language, and they accompany us all our lives, become part and parcel of ourselves and produce lasting results. The

words of a man who can put his personality into them take effect, but he must have tremendous personality. All teaching is giving and taking, the teacher gives and the taught receives, but the one must have something to give, and the other must be open to receive.

This man came to live near Calcutta, the capital of India, the most important university town in our country, which was sending out sceptics and materialists by the hundreds every year, yet the great men from the different universities used to come and listen to him. I heard of this man, and I went to hear him. He looked just like an ordinary man, with nothing remarkable about him. He used the most simple language, and I thought, "Can this man be a great teacher?" I crept near to him and asked him the question which I had been asking others all my life: "Do you believe in God, Sir?" "Yes," he replied, "Can you prove it, Sir?" "Yes." "How?" "Because I see Him just as I see you here, only in a much intenser sense." That impressed me at once. For the first time I had found a man who dared to say that he saw God, that religion was a reality, to be felt, to be sensed in an infinitely more intense way than we can sense the world. I began to come near that man, day after day, and I actually saw that religion could be given. One touch, one glance, can make a whole life change. I had read about Buddha and Christ and Mahommed, about all those different luminaries of ancient times, how they would stand up and say, "Be thou whole," and the man became whole. I now found it to be true, and when I myself saw this man, all scepticism was brushed aside. It would be done, and my Master used to say: "Religion can be given and taken more tangibly, more really than anything else in the world." Be, therefore, spiritual first; have

something to give, and then stand before the world and give it. Religion is not talk, nor doctrines nor theories, nor is it sectarianism. Religion cannot live in sects and societies. It is the relation between the soul and God; how can it be made into a society? It would then degenerate into a business, and wherever there is business, or business principles in religion, spirituality dies. Religion does not consist in erecting temples, or building churches, or attending public worship. It is not to be found in books, nor in words, nor in lectures, nor in organizations. Religion consists in realization. As a fact, we all know that nothing will satisfy us until we know the truth for ourselves. However we may argue, however much we may hear, but one thing will satisfy us, and that is our own realization, and such an experience is possible for every one of us, if we will only try. The first ideal of this attempt to realize religion is that of renunciation. As far as we can, we must give up. Light and darkness, enjoyment of the world and enjoyment of God will never go together. "Ye cannot serve God and Mammon."

The second idea that I learned from my Master, and which is perhaps the most vital, is the wonderful truth that the religions of the world are not contradictory nor antagonistic; they are but various phases of One Eternal Religion. One Infinite Religion existed all through eternity and will ever exist, and this Religion is expressing itself in various countries, in various ways. Therefore, we must respect all religions and we must try to accept them all as far as we can. Religions manifest themselves not only according to race and geographical position, but according to individual powers. In one man religion is manifesting itself as intense activity, as work. In another it is manifesting itself as intense devotion, in yet

another as mysticism, in others as philosophy, and so forth. It is wrong when we say to others: "Your methods are not right." To learn this central secret that the Truth may be one and yet many at the same time, that we may have different visions of the same Truth from different standpoints, is exactly what must be done. Then, instead of antagonism to anyone, we shall have infinite sympathy with all. Knowing that as long as there are different natures born into this world they will require different applications of the same religious truths, we shall understand that we are bound to have forbearance with each other. Just as Nature is unity in variety, an infinite variation in the phenomenal, and behind all these variations, the Infinite, the Unchangeable, the Absolute, so it is with every man; the microcosm is but a miniature repetition of the macrocosm; in spite of all these variations, in and through them all runs this eternal harmony, and we have to recognise this. This idea, above all other ideas, I find to be the crying necessity of the day. Coming from a country which is a hotbed of religious sects—through good fortune or ill fortune, everyone who has a religious idea wants to send an advance guard there—from my childhood I have been acquainted with the various sects of the world; even the Marmons came to preach in India. Welcome them all! That is the soil on which to preach religion. There it takes root more than in any other country. If you come and teach politics to the Hindus they do not understand, but if you come to preach religion however curious it may be, you will have hundreds and thousands of followers in no time, and you have every chance of becoming a living god in your life-time. I am glad it is so, it is the one thing we want in India. The sects among the Hindus are various, almost infinite in

number, and some of them apparently hopelessly contradictory. Yet they all tell you they are but different manifestations of Religion. "As different rivers, taking their start from different mountains, running crooked or straight, all come and mingle their waters in the ocean, so the different sects, with their different points of view, at last all come unto Thee." This is not a theory, it has to be recognized, but not in that patronizing way which we see with some. "Oh, yes, there are some very good things." (Some even have the most wonderfully liberal idea that other religions are all little bits of a prehistoric evolution, but "ours is the fulfilment of things.") One man says because his is the oldest religion it is the best; another makes the same claim because his is the latest. We have to recognize that each one of them has the same saving power as every other. It is a mass of superstition that you have heard everywhere, either in the temple or the church, that there is any difference. The same God answers all, and it is not you, nor I, nor any body of men, that is responsible for the safety and salvation of the least little bit of the soul; the same Almighty God is responsible for all of them. I do not understand how people declare themselves to be believers in God, and, at the same time, think that God has handed over to a little body of men all truth, and that they are the guardians of the rest of humanity. Do not try to disturb the faith of any man. If you can give him something better, if you can get hold of a man where he stands and give him a push upwards, do so, but do not destroy what he has. The only true teacher is he who can convert himself, as it were, into a thousand persons at a moment's notice. The only true teacher is he who can immediately come down to the level of the student, and transfer his soul to the student's

soul and see through the student's eyes and hear through his ears and understand through his mind. Such a teacher can really teach and none else. All these negative, breaking-down, destructive teachers that are in the world can never do any good.

In the presence of my Master I found out that man could be perfect, even in this body. Those lips never cursed anyone, never even criticised anyone. Those eyes were beyond the possibility of seeing evil, that mind had lost the power of thinking evil. He saw nothing but good. That tremendous purity, that tremendous renunciation is the one secret of spirituality. "Neither through wealth, nor through progeny, but through renunciation alone, is immortality to be reached," say the Vedas. "Sell all thou hast and give to the poor, and follow me," says Christ.

So all great saints and prophets have expressed it, and have carried it out in their lives. How can great spirituality come without that renunciation? Renunciation is the background of all religious thought wherever it be, and you will always find that as this idea of renunciation lessens, the more will the senses creep into the field of religion, and spirituality will decrease in the same ratio. That man was the embodiment of renunciation. In our country it is necessary for a man who becomes a Sannyasin to give up all worldly wealth and position, and this my Master carried out literally. There were many who would have felt themselves blest, if he would only have accepted a present from their hands, who would gladly have given him thousands if he would have taken them, but these were the only men from whom he would turn away. He was a triumphant example, a living realization of the complete

conquest of lust and desire for money. He was beyond all ideas of either, and such men are necessary for this century. Such renunciation is necessary in these days when men have begun to think that they cannot live a month without what they call their "necessities," and which they are increasing in geometrical ratio. It is necessary in a time like this that a man shall arise to demonstrate to the sceptics of the world that there yet breathes a man who does not care a straw for all the gold or all the fame that is in the universe. Yet there are such men.

The first part of my Master's life was spent in acquiring spirituality, and the remaining years in distributing it. Men came in crowds to hear him and he would talk twenty hours in the twenty-four, and that not for one day, but for months and months, until at last the body broke down under the pressure of this tremendous strain. His intense love for mankind would not let him refuse to help even the humblest of the thousands who sought his aid. Gradually there developed a vital throat disorder and yet he could not be persuaded to refrain from these exertions. As soon as he heard that people were asking to see him he would insist upon having them admitted and would answer all their questions. There was no rest for him. Once a man asked him: "Sir, you are a great Yogi, why do you not put your mind a little on your body and cure your disease?" At first he did not answer, but when the question had been repeated he gently said: "My friend, I have thought you were a sage, but you talk like other men of the world. This mind has been given to the Lord, do you mean to say that I should take it back and put it upon the body which is but a mere cage of the soul?"

So he went on preaching to the people, and the news spread that his body was about to pass away, and the people began to flock to him in greater crowds than ever. You cannot imagine the way they come to these great religious teachers in India, crowd around them and make gods of them while they are yet living. Thousands are ready to touch simply the hem of their garments. It is through this appreciation of spirituality in others that spirituality is produced. Whatever any man wants and appreciates, that he will get, and it is the same with nations. If you go to India and deliver a political lecture, however grand it may be, you will scarcely find people to listen to you, but just go and teach religion, *live* it, not merely talk it, and hundreds will crowd just to look at you, to touch your feet. When the people heard that this holy man was likely to go from them soon, they began to come around him more than ever before, and my Master went on teaching them without the least regard for his health. We could not prevent this. Many of the people came from long distances, and he would not rest until he had answered their questions. "While I can speak I must teach them," he would say, and he was as good as his word. One day he told us that he would lay down the body that day, and repeating the most sacred word of the Vedas he entered into *Samadhi* and so passed away.

His thoughts and his message were known to very few who were capable of teaching them. Among others, he left a few young boys who had renounced the world, and were ready to carry on his work. Attempts were made to crush them. But they stood firm, having the inspiration of that great life before them. Having had the contact of that blessed life for years, they stood their ground. These young men were living as Sannyasins, begging through

the streets of the city where they were born, although some of them came from first-class families. At first they met with great antagonism, but they persevered and went on from day to day spreading all over India the message of that great man, until the whole country was filled with the ideas he had preached. This man from a remote village of Bengal, without education, simply by the sheer force of his own determination, realized the truth and gave it to others, leaving only a few young boys to keep it alive.

To-day the name of Sri Ramakrishna Paramahamsa is known all over India with its millions of people. Nay, the power of that man has spread beyond India, and if there has ever been a word of truth, a word of spirituality that I have spoken anywhere in the world, I owe it to my Master; only the mistakes are mine.

This is the message of Sri Ramakrishna to the modern world. "Do not care for doctrines, do not care for dogmas, or sects, or churches or temples; they count for little compared with the essence of existence in each man which is spirituality, and the more that this is developed in a man, the more powerful is he for good. Earn that, first acquire that, and criticise no one, for all doctrines and creeds have some good in them. Show by your lives that religion does not mean words, nor names, nor sects, but that it means spiritual realization. Only those can understand who have felt. Only those that have attained to spirituality can communicate it to others, can be great teachers of mankind. They alone are the powers of light."

The more such men are produced in a country, the more that country will be raised; and that country where such men absolutely do not exist is simply doomed, nothing can save it. Therefore, my Master's message to mankind is, "Be spiritual and realize truth for yourself." He would

have you give up for the sake of your fellow beings. He would have you cease talking about love for your brother, and set to work to prove your words. The time has come for renunciation, for realization, and then you will see the harmony in all the religions of the world. You will know that there is no need of any quarrel, and then only will you be ready to help humanity. To proclaim and make clear the fundamental unity underlying all religions was the mission of my Master. Other teachers have taught special religions which bear their names, but this great Teacher of the nineteenth century made no claim for himself, he left every religion undisturbed because he had realized that, in reality, they are all part and parcel of one Eternal Religion.

HINDUISM AS A RELIGION.*

SWAMI'S THANKS FOR THE RECEPTION.

IT fills my heart with joy unspeakable to rise in response to the warm and cordial welcome which you have given us, I thank you in the name of the most ancient order of monks in the world; I thank you in the name of the mother of religions; and I thank you in the name of the millions and millions of Hindu people of all classes and sects.

My thanks, also, to some of the speakers on this platform who have told you that these men from far-off nations may well claim the honor of bearing to the different lands the idea of toleration. I am proud to belong to a religion which has taught the world both tolerance and universal acceptance. We believe not only in universal toleration, but we accept all religions as true. I belong to a religion into whose sacred language, the Sanskrit, the word exclusion is untranslatable. I am proud to belong to a nation which has sheltered the persecuted and the refugees of all religions and all nations of the earth. We have gathered in our bosom the purest remnant of the Israelites, a remnant which came to Southern India and took refuge with us in the very year in which their holy temple was shattered to pieces by Roman tyranny. I belong to the religion which has sheltered and is still fostering the remnant of the grand Zoroastrian nation. I will quote to you, brethren,

* Lecture before the Parliament of Religions held at Chicago in 1893.

a few lines from a hymn which I remember to have repeated from my earliest boyhood, which is every day repeated by millions of human beings: " As the different streams have their sources in different places and mingle their waters in the sea, O Lord, so the different paths which men take through different tendencies, various though they appear, crooked or straight, all lead to Thee."

The present convention, which is one of the most august assemblies ever held, is in itself a vindication, a declaration to the world of the wonderful doctrine preached in the Gita: " Whosoever comes to me, through whatsoever form I reach him, they are all struggling through paths that in the end always lead to me." Sectarianism, bigotry, and its horrible descendant, fanaticism, have possessed long this beautiful earth. It has filled the earth with violence, drenched it often and often with human blood, destroyed civilization and sent whole nations to despair. Had it not been for this horrible demon, human society would be far more advanced than it is now. But its time has come and I fervently hope that the bell that tolled this morning in honor of this convention may be the death-knell to all fanaticism, to all persecutions with the sword or the pen and to all uncharitable feelings between persons wending their way to the same goal.

HINDUISM: A UNIVERSAL FAITH.

Swami Vivekananda, of India, presented a paper on the Hindu faith, in which he said:

Three religions stand now in the world which have come down to us from time prehistoric—Hinduism, Zoroastrianism, and Judaism. These all have received tremendous shocks and all of them prove by their survival their internal strength. But while Judaism failed to

absorb Christianity and was driven out of its place of birth by its all-conquering daughter, and a hundred thousand Parsis are all that are left to bear witness to their grand religion; sect after sect arose in India and seemed to shake the religion of the Vedas to its very foundations, but, like the waters of the seashore in a tremendous earthquake, it receded only for a while, again to return in an all-absorbing flood, and when the tumult of the rush was over, these sects were all sucked in, absorbed and assimilated in the immense body of the mother faith.

From the high spiritual flights of Vedantic philosophy, of which the latest discoveries of science seem like echoes, from the agnosticism of the Buddhists and the atheism of the Jains to the low ideas of idolatry and the multifarious mythologies, each and all have a place in the Hindu's religion.

Where then, the question arises, where then is the common centre to which all these widely diverging radii converge? Where is the common basis upon which all these seemingly hopeless contradictions rest? And this is the question which I shall attempt to answer.

ABOUT THE VEDAS.

The Hindus have received their religion through the revelation of the Vedas. They hold that the Vedas are without beginning and without end. It may sound ludicrous to this audience how a book can be without beginning or end. But by the Vedas no books are meant. They mean the accumulated treasury of spiritual laws discovered by different persons in different times. Just as the law of gravitation existed before its discovery and would exist if all humanity forget it, so it is with the laws that govern the spiritual world; the moral, ethical, and spiritual relations between soul and soul, and between

individual spirits and the Father of all spirits, were there before their discovery and will remain even if we forget them.

The discoverers of these laws are called Rishis, and we honor them as perfected beings. I am glad to tell this audience that some of the very best of them were women.

Here it may be said that these laws as laws may be without end, but they must have had a beginning. The Vedas teach us that creation is without beginning or end. Science has proved to us that the sum total of the cosmic energy is the same throughout all time. Then, if there was a time when nothing existed, where was all this manifested energy? Some say it was in a potential form in God. But then God is sometimes potential and sometimes kinetic, which would make him mutable, and everything mutable is a compound, and everything compound must undergo that change which is called destruction. And thus God would die. Therefore, there never was a time when there was no creation.

If I may be allowed to apply a simile, creation and creator are two lines, without beginning and without end, running parallel to each other, and God is power, and ever active Providence, under Whose power, systems after systems are being evolved out of chaos,—made to run for a time and again destroyed. This is what the Hindu boy repeats every day with his Guru, "The sun and the moon the Lord created after other suns and moons." And this agrees with science.

DEFINES EXISTENCE.

Here I stand; and if I shut my eyes and try to conceive my existence, "I," "I," "I," what is the idea before me? The idea of a body. Am I, then nothing but a combination of matter and material substances? The

Vedas declare, "No." I am a spirit living in a body. I am not the body. The body will die, but I will not die. Here am I in this body, and when it will fall still will I go on living? Also I had a past. The soul was not created from nothing, for creation means a combination, and that means a certain future dissolution. If, then, the soul was created, it must die. Therefore, it was not created. Some are born happy enjoying perfect health with beautiful body and mental vigour and with all their wants supplied. Others are born miserable. Some are without hands or feet, some are idiots and only drag on a miserable existence. Why, if they are all created, why does a just and merciful God create one happy and the other unhappy? Why is He so partial? Nor would it mend matters in the least to hold that those who are miserable in this life will be perfect in a future life. Why should a man be miserable even here in the reign of a just and merciful God?

In the second place such an idea does not give us any cause, but simply, the cruel fiat of an all-powerful being, and therefore it is unscientific. There must have been causes then to make a man miserable or happy before his birth, and those are his past actions. Why may not all the tendencies of the mind and body be accounted for by inherited aptitude from parents? Here are the two parallel lines of existence—one that of the mind—the other that of matter.

MENTAL HEREDITY.

If matter and its transformation answer for all that we have there is no necessity for supposing the existence of a soul. But it cannot be proved that thought has been evolved out of matter, and if a philosophical monism is inevitable, spiritual monism is certainly logical and no less

desirable, but neither of these is necessary here. We cannot deny that bodies inherit certain tendencies, but those tendencies only mean the physical configuration through which a peculiar mind alone can act in a peculiar way. The peculiar tendencies of any soul are caused by its past actions. A soul with a certain tendency will take birth in a body which is the fittest instrument for the display of that tendency, by the laws of affinity. And this is in perfect accord with science, for science wants to explain everything by habit, and habit is the result of repetitions. So these repetitions are also necessary to explain the natural habits of a new-born soul. They were not got in this present life, therefore they must have come down from past lives.

But there is another suggestion, which takes all these for granted. How is it that I do not remember anything of my past life? This can be easily explained. I am now speaking English. It is not my mother-tongue, in fact, not a word of my mother-tongue is present in my consciousness; but let me try to bring such words up, they rush into my consciousness. That shows that consciousness is the name only of the surface of the mental ocean, and within its depths are stored up all our experiences. Try and struggle, and they will come up, and you will be conscious even of the experiences of a past life.

RECALLING THE PAST.

This is direct and demonstrative evidence. Verification is the perfect proof of a theory, and here is the challenge thrown to the world by our Rishis. We have discovered the secrets by which the very depths of the ocean of memory can be stirred up—follow them and you will get a complete reminiscence of your past life.

So then the Hindu believes that he is a spirit. Him the sword cannot pierce, him the fire cannot burn, him the water cannot melt, him the air cannot dry. The Hindu believes that every soul is a circle whose circumference is nowhere but whose centre is located in a body, and that death means the change of this centre from body to body. Nor is the soul bound by the conditions of matter. In its very essence it is free, unbound, holy, and pure, and perfect. But somehow or other it has got itself tied down closely to matter, and thinks of itself as matter.

Why should the free, perfect, and pure being be thus under the thraldom of matter? How can the perfect soul be deluded into the belief that he is imperfect? We have been told that the Hindus shirk the question and say that no such question can be there. Some thinkers want to answer the question by the supposing of one or more quasi-perfect beings, and use big technical names to fill up the gap. But naming is not explaining. The question remains the same. How can the perfect become the quasi-perfect; how can the pure, the absolute, change even a microscopically small part of its nature? The Hindu is sincere. He does not want to take shelter under sophistry. He is brave enough to face the question in a manly fashion. And his answer is, "I do not know." I do not know how the perfect being, the soul, came to think of itself as imperfect, as joined and conditioned by matter. But the fact is a fact for all that. It is a fact in everybody's consciousness that he thinks himself as the body. We do not attempt to explain why I am, why my soul is, in this body. The answer that it is the will of God is no explanation. This is nothing more than what they say themselves, "We do not know."

SOUL IS ETERNAL.

Well, then, the human soul is eternal and immortal, perfect and infinite, and death means only a change of centre from one body to another. The present is determined by our past actions, and the future will be by the present. The soul will go on evolving up or reverting back from birth to birth and death to death. It is like a tiny boat in a tempest, raised one moment on the foaming crest of a billow and dashed down into a yawning chasm the next, rolling to and fro at the mercy of good and bad actions—a powerless, helpless wreck in an ever-raging, ever-rushing, uncompromising current of cause and effect; a little moth placed under the wheel of causation which rolls on crushing everything in its way, and waits not for the widow's tears or the orphan's cry.

The heart sinks at this idea, yet such is the law of Nature. Is there no hope? Is there no escape? The cry that went up from the bottom of the heart of despair reached the throne of Mercy, and words of hope and consolation came down and inspired a Vedic sage, and he stood up before the world and in trumpet voice proclaimed the glad tidings to the world. "Hear, ye children of immortal bliss, even ye that reside in higher spheres, I have found the way out, I have found the ancient One, who is beyond all darkness, all delusion, and knowing Him alone you shall be saved from death again." "Children of immortal bliss," what a sweet, what a hopeful name. Allow me to call you, brethren, by that sweet name—heirs of immortal bliss—yea, the Hindu refuses to call you sinners.

CHILDREN OF GOD.

Ye are the children of God; the sharers of immortal bliss, holy and perfect beings. Ye, divinities on earth,

sinners? It is a sin to call a man so. It is a standing libel on human nature. Come up O! lions and shake off the delusion that you are sheep—you are souls immortal, spirits free and blest and eternal, ye are not matter, ye are not bodies. Matter is your servant, not you the servant of matter.

Thus it is that the Vedas proclaim, not a dreadful combination of unforgiving laws, not an endless prison of cause and effect, but that at the head of all natural laws, in and through every particle of matter and force, stands One "through whose command the wind blows, the fire burns, the clouds rain and death stalks upon the earth." And what is His nature?

He is everywhere, the pure and formless One, the Almighty and the All-merciful. "Thou art our father, Thou art our mother, Thou art our beloved friend, Thou art the source of all strength. Thou art He that beareth the burdens of the universe; help me bear the little burden of this life." Thus sang the Rishis of the Veda. And how are we to worship Him? Through love. "He is to be worshipped as the one beloved, dearer than every thing in this and the next life."

This is the doctrine of love preached in the Vedas, and let us see how it is fully developed and preached by Krishna, whom the Hindus believe to have been God incarnate on earth.

KRISHNA'S TEACHING.

He taught that a man ought to live in this world like a lotus leaf, which grows in water but is never moistened by water—so a man ought to live in this world with his heart for God and his hands for work.

It is good to love God for hope of reward in this or the next world, but it is better to love God for love's sake

and the prayer goes, "Lord, I do not want wealth, nor children, nor learning. If it be Thy will I will go to a hundred hells, but grant me this, that I may love Thee without the hope of reward—unselfishly love for love's sake." One of the disciples of Krishna, the then Emperor of India, was driven from his throne by his enemies and had to take shelter in a forest in the Himalayas with his queen, and there one day the queen was asking him how it was that he, the most virtuous of men, should suffer so much misery, and Yudhisthira answered: "Behold, my queen, the Himalayas, how grand and beautiful they are. I love them. They do not give me anything, but my nature is to love the grand, the beautiful; therefore I love them. Similarly, I love the Lord. He is the source of all beauty, of all sublimity. He is the only object to be loved. My nature is to love him, and therefore I love. I do not pray for anything, I do not ask for anything. Let him place me wherever he likes. I must love him for love's sake. I cannot trade in love."

SOUL IS DIVINE.

The Vedas teach that the soul is divine, only held here under the bondage of matter, and that perfection will be reached by it when this bond shall burst, and the word they use for this perfection is, therefore, Mukti—freedom—freedom from the bonds of imperfection, freedom from death and misery.

And they teach that this bondage can only fall off through the mercy of God, and that this mercy comes to the pure. So purity is the condition for the bestowal of His mercy. How that mercy acts! He reveals himself to the pure heart, and the pure and stainless man sees God, yea, even in this life, and then, and then only, all the crookedness of the heart is made straight. Then all

doubt ceases. Man is no more the freak of a terrible law of causation. So this is the very centre, the very vital conception of Hinduism. The Hindu does not want to live upon words and theories. If there are existences beyond the ordinary sensual existence, he wants to come face to face with them. If there is a soul in him which is not matter, if there is an All-merciful Universal Soul, he will go to Him direct. He must see Him and that alone can destroy all doubts. So the best proof a Hindu sage gives, about the soul, about God, is, "I have seen the soul, I have seen God."

And that is the only condition of perfection. The Hindu religion does not consist in struggles and attempts to believe a certain doctrine or dogma, but in realizing—not in believing, but in being and becoming.

THE RELIGION OF THE HINDUS.

So the whole struggle in their system is a constant struggle to become perfect, to become divine, to reach God and see God, and in thus reaching God, seeing God, and becoming perfect, even as the father in Heaven is perfect, consists the religion of the Hindus.

And what becomes of man when he becomes perfect? He lives a life of bliss infinite. He enjoys infinite and perfect bliss having obtained the only thing in which man ought to have pleasure—God—and enjoys the bliss with God.

So far all the Hindus are agreed. This is the common religion of all the sects of India, but then the question comes,—perfection is absolute, and the absolute cannot be two or three. It cannot have any qualities. It cannot be an individual. And so when a soul becomes perfect and absolute, it must become one with Brahman, and such a soul would only realize the Lord as the perfection, the

reality, of its own nature and existence—existence absolute, knowledge absolute, and life absolute. We have often and often read about this being called the losing of individuality as in becoming a stock or a stone. "He jests at scars that never felt a wound."

I tell you it is nothing of the kind. If it is happiness to enjoy the consciousness of this small body, it must be more happiness to enjoy the consciousness of two bodies, so three, four, or five—and the ultimate of happiness would be reached when this sense of enjoyment would become a universal consciousness.

INFINITE INDIVIDUALITY.

Therefore, to gain such infinite universal individuality this miserable little individuality must go. Then alone can death cease, when I am one with life. Then alone can misery cease when I am one with happiness itself. Then alone can all errors cease when I am one with knowledge itself. And this is a necessary scientific conclusion. Science has proved that physical individuality is a delusion, that really my body is one little continuously changing body in an unbroken ocean of matter, and *adwaitism* is thus the necessary conclusion in regard to my other counterpart,—mind.

Science is nothing but the finding of unity, and as soon as any science can reach the perfect unity it must stop from further progress, because it will then have reached the goal. Thus, chemistry cannot progress farther when it shall have discovered one element out of which all others can be made. Physics will stop when it becomes able to discover the one energy of which all others are but manifestations. The science of religion became perfect when it discovered Him who is the one life in a universe of death, who is the constant basis of an ever-changing world

who is the only soul of which all souls are but manifestations. Thus through multiplicity and duality the ultimate unity was reached, and religion can go no farther. And this is the goal of all Science.

MANIFESTATION, NOT CREATION.

And all science is bound to come to this conclusion in the long run. Manifestation, and not creation, is the word of science to-day, and the Hindu is only glad that what he has cherished in his bosom for ages is going to be taught in more forcible language and with further right by the latest conclusions of science.

Descend we now from the aspirations of philosophy to the religion of the ignorant. At the very outset, I may tell you that there is no Polytheism in India. In every temple, if one stands by and listens, one will find the worshippers apply all the attributes of God—including omnipresence—to the images. This is not Polytheism. "The rose called by any other name would smell as sweet." Names are not explanations.

I remember when a boy a Christian man was preaching to a crowd in India. Among other sweet things he was asking the people, he asked if he gave a blow to their idol with his stick, what it could do. One of his hearers sharply answered, "If I abuse your God what can he do?" "You will be punished," said the preacher, "when you die." "So my idol will punish you when you die," said the villager.

The tree is known by its fruits, and when I have seen amongst them, that are called idolators, men the like of whose morality and spirituality and love I have never seen anywhere, I stop and ask myself, "Can sin beget holiness?"

BIGOTRY DENOUNCED.

Superstition is the enemy of man, but bigotry is worse. Why does a Christian go to church? Why is the cross holy? Why is the face turned toward the sky in prayer? Why are there so many images in the Catholic church? Why are there so many images in the minds of Protestants when they pray? My brethren, we can no more think about anything without a material image than we can live without breathing. And by the law of association the material image calls the mental idea up and *vice versa*. Omnipresence, to almost the whole world, means nothing. Has God superficial area? If not, when we repeat the word we think of the extended earth, that is all.

As we find that somehow or other, by the laws of our constitution, we have got to associate our ideas of infinity with the image of the blue sky, or of the sea, some connect naturally their idea of holiness with the image of a church or a mosque or a cross. The Hindus have associated the ideas of holiness, purity, truth, omnipresence, and all other such ideas with different images and form. But with this difference. Some others devote their whole lives to their idol of a church and never rise higher, because with them religion means an intellectual assent to certain doctrines and doing good to their fellows. The whole religion of the Hindu is, however, centred in realization. Man is to become divine by realizing the divine, and, therefore, idol or temple or church or books, are only the supports, the helps, of his spiritual childhood; but on and on man must progress.

NO STOPPING ANYWHERE.

He must not stop anywhere. "External worship, material worship," says the Veda, "is the lowest stage, struggling to rise high, mental prayer is the next stage,

but the highest stage is when the Lord has been realized." Mark, the same earnest man who is kneeling before the idol tells you, "Him the sun cannot express, nor the moon, nor the stars, the lightning cannot express him, nor the fire; through him they all shine." He does not abuse the images or call it sinful. He recognises in it a necessary stage of his life. "The child is father of the man." Would it be right for the old man to say that childhood is a sin or youth a sin? Nor is image-worship compulsory in Hinduism.

If a man can realize his divine nature most easily with the help of an image, would it be right to call it a sin? Nor, even when he has passed that stage, should he call it an error. To the Hindu, man is not travelling from error to truth, but from truth to truth, from lower to higher truth. To him all the religions, from the lowest fetishism to the highest absolutism, mean so many attempts of the human soul to grasp and realize the infinite, each determined by the conditions of its birth and association; and each of these religions, therefore, marks a stage of progress, and every soul is a child-eagle soaring higher and higher, gathering more and more strength till it reaches the Glorious Sun.

DOGMAS AND PEGS.

Unity in variety is the plan of nature, and the Hindu has recognized it. Other religions lay down certain fixed dogmas, and try to force society to adopt them. They place before society only one kind of coat which must fit Jack and John and Henry, all alike. If it does not fit John or Henry, he must go without a coat to cover his body. The Hindus have discovered that the absolute can only be realized, or thought of, or stated, through the relative, and the images, cross or crescent, are simply s

many centres, so many pegs to hang the spiritual ideas on. It is not that this help is necessary for the many, and those that do not need it have no right to say that it is wrong in any way with those who need it.

One thing I must tell you. Idolatry in India does not mean anything horrible. It is not the mother of harlots. On the other hand, it is the attempt of undeveloped minds to grasp high spiritual truths. The Hindus have their faults, but mark this, they are always for punishing their own bodies and never for cutting the throats of their neighbours. If the Hindu fanatic burns himself on the pyre, he does not light the fire of inquisition. And even this weakness of his cannot be laid at the door of religion any more than the burning of witches can be laid at the door of Christianity.

To the Hindu, then, the whole world of religions is only a travelling, a coming up, of different men and women, through various conditions and circumstances, to the same goal. Every religion is only an evolution, out of the material man, of a God—and the same God is the inspirer of all of them. Why, then, are there so many contradictions? They are only apparent, says the Hindu. The contradictions come from the same truth adapting itself to the different circumstances of different natures.

GOD IN ALL RELIGIONS.

It is the same Light coming through different colors. And these little variations are necessary for purposes of adaptation. But in the heart of everything the same truth reigns. The Lord has declared to the Hindu in his incarnation as Krishna, "I am in every religion as the thread through a string of pearls. And wherever thou seest extraordinary holiness and extraordinary power raising and purifying humanity, know thou that I am

these." And what is the result of such teaching? Through the whole order of Sanskrit Philosophy, I challenge anybody to find any such expression as is intended to declare that the Hindu alone will be saved and not others. Says Vyas, "We find perfect men even beyond the pale of our caste and creed." How, then, can the Hindu whose whole idea centres in God believe in the Buddhism which is agnostic, or in the Jainism which is atheistic, you may ask.

The whole force of the Jains and the Buddhists is directed to the great central truth and work in every religion, to evolve a God out of man. They have not seen the Father, but they have seen the Son. And he that hath seen the Son hath seen the Father.

This, brethren, is a short sketch of the religious ideas of the Hindus. The Hindu may have failed to carry out all his plans. But if there is ever to be a universal religion, it must be that one which will have no location in place or time; which will be infinite, like the God it will reach; whose sun will shine upon the followers of Krishna or Christ, saints or sinners, alike, which will not be the Brahmin's or the Buddhist's, the Christian's or the Mahommedan's religion, but be the sum total of all these, and still have infinite space for development; which in its catholicity will embrace in its infinite arms, and find a place for every human being, from the lowest grovelling man not far removed from the brute, to the highest man towering by the virtues of his heart and mind almost above humanity and making society stand in awe of him and doubt his very human nature.

UNIVERSAL RELIGION.

It will then be a religion which will have no place for persecution or intolerance in its polity, which will

recognize a divinity in every man or woman, and the whole force of which will be directed towards aiding humanity to realize its own true divine nature.

Offer religions in thy hand, and all the nations must follow thee. Asoka's council was a council of the Buddhist faith. Akbar's, though more to the purpose, was only a parlour-meeting. It was reserved for America to call, to proclaim to all quarters of the globe that the Lord is in every religion.

May he who is the Brahma of the Hindus, the Ahura Mazda of the Zoroastrians, the Buddha of the Buddhists, the Jehovah of the Jews, the Father in heaven of the Christians, give strength to you to carry out your noble idea. The star arose in the East; it travelled steadily toward the West, sometimes dimmed and sometimes effulgent, till it made a circuit of the world, and now it is again rising on the very horizon of the East, the borders of the Tasifu, a thousandfold more effulgent than it ever was before.

BROTHERHOOD.

I will tell you a little story. You have heard the eloquent speaker who has just finished say: "Let us cease from abusing each other," and he was very sorry that there should be always so much variance.

But I think I should tell you a story which would illustrate the cause of this variance. A frog lived in a well. It had lived there for a long time. It was born there and brought up there, and yet was a little, small frog. Of course, the evolutionists were not there then to tell us whether the frog lost its eyes or not, but, for our story's sake, we must take it for granted that it had its eyes, and that it every day cleansed the waters of all the worms and bacilli that lived in it with an energy that would give

credit to our modern bacteriologists. In this way it went on and became a little slick and fat. Well, one day another frog that lived in the sea came and fell into the well.

"Where are you from?"

"I am from the sea."

"The sea: how big is that? Is it as big as my well?" and he took a leap from one side of the well to the other.

"My friend," says the frog of the sea, "how do you compare the sea with your little well?"

Then the frog took another leap and asked, "Is your sea so big?"

"What nonsense you speak, to compare the sea with your well."

"Well, then," said the frog of the well, "nothing can be bigger than my well; there can be nothing bigger than this; this fellow is a liar so turn him out."

That has been the difficulty all the while.

I am a Hindu. I am sitting in my own little well and thinking that the whole world is my little well. The Christian sits in his little well and thinks the whole world is his well. The Mohamedan sits in his little well and thinks that is the whole world. I have to thank you of America for the great attempt you are making to break down the barriers of this little world of ours, and hope that, in the future, the Lord will help you to accomplish your purpose.

FAREWELL.

The World's Parliament of Religions has become an accomplished fact, and the merciful Father has helped those who laboured to bring it into existence, and crowned with success their most unselfish labour.

My thanks to those noble souls whose large hearts and love of truth first dreamed this wonderful dream and then

realized it. My thanks to the shower of liberal sentiments that has overflowed this platform. My thanks to this enlightened audience for their uniform kindness to me and for their appreciation of every thought that tends to smooth the friction of religions. A few jarring notes were heard from time to time in this harmony. My special thanks to them, for they have, by their striking contrast made the general harmony the sweeter.

Much has been said of the common ground of religious unity. I am not going just now to venture out my new theory. But if any one here hopes that this unity will come by the triumph of any one of these religions and the destruction of all the others, to him I say: "Brother, yours is an impossible hope." Do I wish that the Christian should become the Hindu? God forbid. Do I wish that the Hindu or the Buddhist should become the Christian? God forbid.

The seed is put in the ground, and the earth and the air and the water are around it. Does the seed become the earth, or the air, or the water? No. It becomes a plant, it develops after the law of its own growth, assimilates to itself the air, the earth, and the water, converts them into plant substance, and grows a plant.

Similar is the case with religion. The Christian is not to become a Hindu or a Buddhist, nor the Hindu nor the Buddhist to become a Christian. But each religion must assimilate the others and yet preserve its own individuality and grow according to its own law of growth.

If the Parliament of Religions has shown anything to the world it is this. It has proved to the world that holiness, purity and charity are not the exclusive possessions of any church in the world and that every system has produced men and women of the most exalted character.

In the face of this evidence, if anybody dreams of the exclusive survival of his own and the destruction of the others, I pity him from the bottom of my heart, and point out to him that upon the banner of every religion would soon be written in spite of their resistance: "Help and Not Fight," "Assimilation and Not Destruction," "Harmony and Peace and Not Dissension."

ADDRESSES OF CONGRATULATIONS FROM MADRAS AND CALCUTTA.

SWAMI'S REPLY TO THE ADDRESSES.

THE following is the full text of the reply of Swami Vivekananda to the Addresses of congratulation voted by the public of Madras and Calcutta in meetings specially convened in appreciation of his services in America on behalf of the Hindu Religion.

Friends, Fellow-countrymen and Co-religionists of Madras,—It is most gratifying to me to find that my insignificant service to the cause of our religion has been acceptable to you, not because it is a personal appreciation of me and my work in foreign and distant land, but a sure sign that, though whirlwind after whirlwind of foreign invasion has passed over the devoted head of India, though centuries of neglect on our part and contempt on the part of our conquerors have visibly dimmed the glories of ancient Aryavarta, though many a stately column on which it rested, many a beautiful arch and many a marvellous corner have been washed away by the inundations that have deluged the land for centuries,—that the centre is all sound, the keystone is unimparied; the spiritual foundation upon which the marvellous monument of Glory to God and charity to all beings has been reared, stands unshaken, strong as ever. It is a generous appreciation of Him whose message to India and to the whole world, I, the most unworthy of His servants, have had the privilege to bear; it is your innate spiritual instinct which saw in Him

and, His message the first murmurs of that tidal wave of spirituality which is destined at no distant future to break upon India in all its irresistible power, carrying away in its omnipotent flood all that is weak and defective, and raising the Hindu race to the platform it is destined to occupy in the providence of God, crowned with more glory than it ever had even in the past, the reward of centuries of silent suffering, and fulfilling its mission amongst the races of the world,—the evolution of spiritual humanity.

The people of Northern India are especially grateful to you of the South as the great source to which most of the impulses that are working in India to-day can be traced. The great Bhashyakaras, epoch-making Acharyas, Sankara, Ramanuja, and Madhva were born in Southern India: great Sankara to whom every Advaitavadin in the world owes allegiance; great Ramanuja whose heavenly touch converted the down-trodden Pariahs into Alwars; great Madhva whose leadership was recognised even by the followers of the only Northern prophet whose power has been felt all over the length and breadth of India—Sri Krishna Chaitanya. Even at the present day it is the South that carries the palm in the glories of Benares,—your renunciation controls the sacred shrines on the farthest peaks of the Himalayas, and what wonder that with the blood of prophets running in your veins, with your lives blessed by such Acharyas, you are the first and foremost to appreciate and hold on to the message of Bhagavan Sri Rama Krishna.

The South has been the repository of Vedic learning, and you will understand me when I state that, in spite of the reiterated assertions of aggressive ignorance, it is the Sruti still that is the backbone of all the different division of the Hindu religion.

However great may be the merits of the Samhita and the Brahmana portions of the Vedas to the ethnologist or the philologist, however desirable may be the results which the "Agnimide" or the "Ishetvorjetva" or the "Sannodevirabhishtaye" in conjunction with the different vedis and sacrifices and libations produce,—it was all in the way of Bhoga; and no one ever contended that they could produce "Moksha." As such, the "Gnana Kanda," the Aranyakas, the Srutis *par excellence*, which teach the way to spirituality, the "Moksha Marga," have always ruled and will always rule in India.

Lost in the mazes and divisions of the "religion eternal" by prepossession and prejudice, unable to grasp the meaning of the only religion whose universal adaptation is the exact shadow of the "Anoraniyan Mahato Mahiyan" God it preaches, groping in the dark with a standard of spiritual truth borrowed second hand from nations who never knew anything but rank materialism, the modern young Hindu struggles in vain to understand the religion of his fore-fathers, and gives up the quest altogether and becomes a hopeless wreck of an agnostic, or else, unable to vegetate on account of the promptings of his innate religious nature, drinks carelessly of some of those different decoctions of Western materialism with an eastern flavour, and thus fulfills the prophecy of the Sruti,—

"Pariyanti mudha andhenaiva niyamana yathandhah."

They alone escape whose spiritual nature has been touched and vivified by the life-giving touch of the "Sadguru."

Well has it been said by Bhagavan Bhashyakara—

"Durlabham trayamevaitat devanugraha hetukam.

Manushyatvam, mumukhshutvam, maha-purusha-sans-rayah."

Either to the sharp analysis of the Vaiseshikas resulting in the wonderful theories about the "Paramanus," the "Dvyanus," and the "Transarenus" or to the still more wonderful analysis displayed in the discussions of the Jati, Dravya, Guna, Samavaya, and the other categories of the Naiyayikas, rising to the solemn march of thought . of the Sankhyas, the fathers of the theories of evolution, ending with the ripe fruit, the result of all these researches, the "Sutras of Vyasa,"—the one background to all these different analyses and syntheses of the human mind, is still the Srutis. Even in the philosophical writings of the Buddhists and the Jains, the help of the Srutis is never rejected, and at least in some of the Buddhistic schools and in the majority of the Jain writings, the authority of the Srutis is fully admitted except in regard to what they call the "Himsaka" Srutis, which they hold to be the interpolations of Brahmins. In recent times such a view has been held by the late great Swami Dayananda Sarasvati.

If it be asked to point out the one system towards which as a centre all ancient and modern Indian thought has converged; if one wants to see the real backbone of Hinduism in all its various manifestations, the "Sutras of Vyasa" will unquestionably be pointed out as constituting all that.

Whether one hears the "Advaita Kesari" roaring in peals of thunder, the "Ashti-Bhati" and "Priya" amidst the heart-stopping solemnities of the Himalayan forests mixing with the solemn cadence of the River of Heaven, or listens to the cooing of the "Piya," "Pika," in the beautiful bowers of the grove of Brinda; whether one mingles with the sedate meditations of the monasteries of

Benares, or the ecstatic dances of the followers of the prophet of "Nadiya;" whether one sits at the feet of the teacher of the Visishtadvaita system with its "Vadakale," "Tenkale," and all the other sub-divisions, or listens with reverence to the Acharyas of the Madhva school; whether one hears the martial "Wa Gurukifate" of the secular Sikhs or the sermons of the Grantha Sahib of the "Udasis" and "Nirmalas"; whether one salutes the "Sanyasi" disciples of Kabir with "Satsahib" and listens with joy to the "Sakhis"; whether one pores upon the wonderful lore of that reformer of Rajputana, Dadu, or the works of his royal disciple Sundardas, down to the great Nischaladas, the celebrated author of "Vichar-Sagar" which book has more influence in India than any that has been written in any language within the last three centuries;—even if one asks the "Bhangi Mehtar" of Northern India to sit down and give an account of the teachings of his "Lalguru,"—one will find that all these various teachers and schools have as their basis that system whose authority is the Sruti, the Gita its divine commentary, and the Sariraka Sutras its organized system, and all the different sects in India from the "Paramahansa Parivrajakacharyas" to the poor despised "Mehtar" disciples of Lalguru, different manifestations.

These three "Prasthanas", then, in their different explanations as Dvaita, Visishtadvaita, or Advaita with a few minor recensions, form the "authorities" of the Hindu religion; the "Puranas," the modern representatives of the ancient "Narasamsi," supply the mythology, and the "Tantras," the modern representatives of the "Brahmanas," supply the ritual.

Thus the three "Prasthanas" as authorities are

common to all the sects; but as to the "Puranas" and the "Tantras," each sect has its own.

The Tantras, as we have said, represent the "Vedic rituals" in a modified form, and before any one jumps into the most absurd conclusions about them, I will advise him to read the Tantras in conjunction with the "Brahmanas," especially of the "Adhvaryu" portion. And most of the "Mantras" used in the "Tantras" will be found taken verbatim form their "Brahmanas." As to their influence, apart from the "Srouta" and the "Smarta" rituals, all other forms of ritual observed from the Himalayas to the Comorin have been taken from the Tantras, and they direct the worship of the Saktas, the Saivas, the Vaishnavas and all others alike.

Of course I do not pretend that all the Hindus are thoroughly acquainted with these sources of their religion. Many, especially in Lower Bengal, have not even heard the names of these sects and these great systems; but consciously or unconsciously it is the plan laid down in the three "Prasthanas" that they are all working out.

Wherever on the other hand the Hindvi language is spoken, even the lowest classes have more knowledge of the Vedantic religion than many of the highest in Lower Bengal.

And why so?

Transported from the soil of Mithila to Navadvipa, nurtured and developed by the fostering genius of "Siromani," "Gadadhar," "Jagadis," and a host of other great names, an analysis of the laws of reasoning, in some points superior to every other system in the whole world, expressed in a wonderful and precise mosaic of language,—stands the Nyaya of Bengal, respected and studied throughout the length and breadth of Hindustan. But, alas, Vedic

study was sadly neglected ; and until within the last few years scarcely any one could be found in Bengal to teach the "Mahabhashya" of Patanjali. Once only a mighty genius rose above the never-ending "Avacchinnas" and "Avacchedakas"—Bhagavan Srikrishna Chaitanya. For once the religious lethargy of Bengal was shaken, and for a time she entered into a communion with the religious life of other parts of India.

It is curious to note that though Sri Chaitanya obtained his Sanyas from a Bharati, and as such was a "Bharati" himself, it was through "Madhavendra Puri" that his religious genius was first awakened.

The "Puris" seem to have had a peculiar mission in rousing the spirituality of Bengal. Bhagavan Sri Ram Krishna got his "Sanyasasrama" from "Tota Puri."

The commentary that Sri Chaitanya wrote on the Vyasa Sutras has either been lost or not found yet. His disciples joined themselves to the "Madhvas" of the South. And gradually the mantles of such gaints as Rupa and Sanatana and Jiva Gosvamis fell on the shoulders of "Babajis" and the great movement of Sri Chaitanya was decaying fast ; still of late years there is a sign of revival. I hope that it will regain its lost splendour.

The influence of Sri Chaitanya is all over India. Wherever the "Bhakti Marga" is known, there he is appreciated, studied and worshipped. I have every reason to believe that the whole of the Vallabhacharya recension is only a branch of the sect founded by Sri Chaitanya. But most of his so-called disciples in Bengal do not know how his power is still working all over India, and how can they? The disciples have become "Gadians" while he was preaching barefooted, walking from door to door in India begging "A-chandalas" to love God.

The curious and unorthodox custom of hereditary "Gurus" that prevails in Bengal, and for the most part in Bengal alone, is another cause of her being cut off from the religious life of the rest of India.

The greatest cause of all is that the life of Bengal never received an influx from that of the great brotherhood of "Sanyasins" who are the representatives and repositories of the highest Indian spiritual culture even at the present day.

"Tyag" is not liked by the higher classes of Bengal. Their tendency is for "Bhoga." How can they get a deep insight into spiritual things? "Tyagenaikena amritatvam anasuh" otherwise?

On the other hand throughout the Hindi-speaking world a succession of brilliant "Tyagi" teachers of far-reaching influence have brought the doctrines of the Vedanta to every door. Especially the impetus given to Tyag during the reign of Runjit Sing of the Punjab has made the highest teachings of the Vedantic philosophy available to the very lowest of the low. With true pride the Punjabi peasant girl says that even her spinning wheel repeats "Soham," "Soham." And I have seen "Mehtar" Tyagis in the forest of "Hrishikes" wearing the garb of the "Sanyasi," and studying the Vedantas. Many a proud high-class man would be glad to sit at their feet and learn. And why not? "Antyadapi parodharmah."

Thus it is that the North-West and the Punjab have a religious education which is far ahead of that of Bengal, Bombay or Madras. The ever-travelling Tyagis of the various orders, the "Dasamis" or the "Vairagis" or the "Panthis," bring religion to everybody's door, and it costs only a bit of bread. And how noble and disinterested most of them are. There is one Sanyasin belonging to the

"Kachu Panthis" or independents (who do not identify themselves with any sect), who has been instrumental in the establishing of hundreds of schools and charitable asylums all over Rajputana. He has opened hospitals in forests, and thrown iron bridges over the gorges in the Himalayas, and this man never touches a coin with his hands,—has no earthly possession except a blanket which has given him the nickname of the "Blanket Swami," and begs his bread from door to door. I have never known him taking a whole dinner from one house, lest it should be a tax on the householder. And he is only one amongst many. Do you think that so long as these gods on earth live in India and protect the "religion eternal" with the impenetrable rampart of their godly character, the old religion will die?

In this country the clergymen sometimes receive as high salaries as Rs. 30,000; 40,000; 50,000, even 90,000 a year for preaching two hours in the week on Sunday, and that too only for six months in the year. Look at the millions upon millions they spend for the support of their religion, and young Bengal has been taught these god-like, absolutely unselfish men like the "Kambali-Swami" are idle vagabonds.

"Mad bhaktananchaye bhakta te me bhaktatama matah."

Take even an extreme case, that of an extremely ignorant "Vairagi." Even he when he goes into a village tries his best to impart to the villagers whatever he knows from "Tulsidas," or "Chaitanya charitamritam," or "the Alwars" in Southern India. Is that not doing some good? And all this for only a bit of bread and a rag of cloth. Before unmercifully criticising them think how much you do, my brothers, for your poor fellow-country-

men at whose expense you have got your education, and by grinding whose face you have to maintain your position and pay your teachers for teaching you that the "babajis" are only "vagabonds."

A few of our fellow-countrymen in Bengal have criticised what they call "a new" development of Hinduism. And well they may. For Hinduism is only just now penetrating into Bengal, where so long the whole idea of religion was a bundle of "Desacharas" as to eating and drinking and marriage.

This short paper has not the space for the discussion of such a big subject as whether the view of Hinduism, the disciples of Rama Krishna have been preaching all over India, is in accordance with the "Sat Sastras" or not. But I shall give a few hints to our critics, which may help them in understanding our position better.

In the first place, I never contended that a correct idea of Hinduism can be gathered from the writings of "Kasidas" or "Krittivas," though their words are "Amrita saman," and those that hear them are "Punyavans." But we must go to Vedic and Darsanic authorities and to the great Acharyas and their disciples all over India.

If, brethren, you begin with the Sutras of Gautama and read his theories about the "Aptas" in the light of the commentaries of "Vatsyayana," and go up to the "Mimansakas" with Sabara and other commentators, you will find out what they say about the "Aloukika Pratyaksha" and who are "Aptas" and whether every being can become an "Apta" or not, and that the proof of the Vedas is in their being the words of such "Aptas." If you have to look into the introduction of Mahidhara to the Yajurveda, you will find a still more lucid discussion as to the "Vedas" being laws of the inner life of man, and as such being eternal.

As to the eternity of creation,—this doctrine is the corner-stone not only of the Hindu religion, but that of the Buddhists and the Jains also.

Now all the sects in India can be grouped roughly as following the "Gnana Marga" or the "Bhakti Marga." If you will kindly look into the introduction to the "Sariraka Bhashya" of Sri Sankaracharya, you will find there the "Nirapekshata" of Gnana thoroughly discussed, and the conclusion drawn, that the "realization" of "Brahman" and the attainment of "Moksha" do not depend upon ceremonial, creed, caste, colour, or doctrine. It will come to any "being" who has the four Sadhanas, which are the most perfect moral culture.

As to the "Bhaktas," even Bengali critics know very well that none of their authorities ever declared that caste or nationality or sex, or, for the matter of that, even "human birth" was ever necessary to "moksha." "Bhakti" is the one only thing necessary.

Both "Gnana" and "Bhakti" are everywhere preached to be unconditioned, and there is not one authority who lays down conditions of caste or creed or nationality for attaining "moksha." See the discussion on the Sutra of Vyasa, "Antara chapitu tat drishteh" by Sankara, Ramanuja and Madhva.

Go through all the Upanishads, and even the Samhitas, nowhere will you find the limited ideas of Moksha which every other religion has. As to toleration, it is everywhere, even in the "Samhita," of the "Atharva" Veda in the fortieth chapter. The third or fourth verse, if my memory does not fail me, begins with "Na budhibhedam janayet agnanam karma sanginam." This sentiment is running through everywhere. Was anybody persecuted in India for choosing his "Ishtadevata" or

becoming an atheist or an agnostic even, so long as he obeyed the social regulations? Society may punish anybody by its disapprobation for breaking any of its regulations, but no man, not even the lowest "patita," is ever shut out from "Moksha." You must not mix up the two together. As to that, in Malabar a chandala is not allowed to pass through the same street as a high-caste man, but let him become a Mahomedan or a Christian, "he is immediately allowed to go anywhere," and this rule has prevailed in the dominion of a Hindu sovereign for centuries. It may be queer, but it shows the idea of toleration for other religions even in the most untoward circumstances.

The one idea which distinguishes the Hindu religion from every other in the world, the one idea to express which the sages almost exhaust the vocabulary of the Sanskrit language, is that man must realize God even in this life. And the Advaita texts very logically add, "to know God is to become God."

And here comes, as a necessary consequence, the broadest and most glorious idea of inspiration, proclaimed by "Vidura" and "Dharmavyadha" and a number of others. Even the other day "Nischaladas," a Tyagi of the Dadupanthi sect, boldly declared in his "Vicharsagar," "He who has known Brahman has become Brahman. His words are Vedas, and they will expel the darkness of ignorance whether expressed in Sanskrit or any popular dialect."

Thus to realize God, the Brahman, as the Dvaitins say, or to become Brahman, as the Advaitins say, is the aim and end of the whole teaching of the Vedas, and every other teaching therein contained represents a stage in the course of our progress thereto. And the great glory

of Bhagavan Bhashyakara Sankaracharya is that it was his genius which gave the most wonderful expression to the ideas of Vyasa.

As absolute Brahman alone is true; so relatively true are all the different sects, standing upon different manifestations of the same Brahman, whether in India or elsewhere. Only some are higher than others.

Suppose a man starts straight towards the sun. At every step of his journey he sees newer and newer visions of the sun,—the size, the view and the light will every moment be new, until he reaches the real sun. He sees the sun at first like a big ball, and then it begins to increase in size. The sun is neither small like a ball nor even like all the succession of suns seen in his journey. Still, is it not true that our traveller always sees the sun and nothing but the sun? Similarly, all these various sects are true,—some nearer, some further off from the real Sun,—which is "Ekamevadvitiyâm."

And as the Vedas are the only scriptures which teach this real absolute God of which all other ideas of God are but minimized and limited visions; as the "Sarvaloka hitaishini Sruti" takes the devotee gently by the hand, and leads him from stage to stage through all the stages that are necessary for man to travel to reach the Absolute and as all other religions represent one or other of these stages in an unprogressive and crystallized form; all the other religions of the world are included in the nameless, limitless, eternal Vedic Religion.

Work hundreds of lives out, search every corner of your mind for ages, and still you will not find one noble religious idea that is not already imbedded in that infinite mine of spirituality.

As to the so-called idolatry of the Hindus, first go and

learn the forms they are observing. And where do the worshippers worship God really? In the temple, in the image, or in the temple of their own bodies?

First know for sure what they are doing,—which more than ninety per cent of the revilers are thoroughly ignorant of, and then it will explain itself in the light of the Vedantic philosophy.

Still these Karmas are not compulsory. On the other hand, open your Manu and see where it orders every old man to embrace the fourth "Asrama," and whether they embrace it or not, they must give up all "Karma."

It is reiterated everywhere that all the "Karmas" are wholly comprehended in gnana—"Sarvam karmakhilam Partha gnane pari-samapyate.'

For the matter of that a Hindu peasant has more religious education than many a gentleman in other countries. A friend criticised the use of European terms of philosophy and religion in my addresses. I would have been very glad to use Sanskrit terms; it would have been much more easy as Sanskrit is the only perfect vehicle of religious thought. But the friend forgot that I was addressing an audience of Western people. And although a certain Indian missionary declared that the Hindus had forgotten the meaning of their Sanskrit books, and that it was the missionaries who unearthed their meaning, I could not find in that large concourse of missionaries one that could understand a line in Sanskrit; and some of them read learned papers criticising the Vedas, the Vedanta and all the sacred sources of the Hindu religion.

It is not true that I am against any religion. It is equally untrue that I am hostile to the Christian missionaries in India. But I protest against certain of their methods of raising money in America.

What is meant by those pictures in the school books for children where the Hindu mother is painted as throwing her children to the crocodiles in the Ganges? The mother is black, but the baby is painted white, to arouse more sympathy and get more money! What is meant by those pictures which paint a man burning his wife at a stake with his own hands, so that she may become a ghost and torment the husband's enemy? What is meant by those pictures of huge cars crushing human beings? The other day a book was published for children in this country where one of these gentlemen tells a narrative of his visit to Calcutta. He says he saw a car running over fanatics in the streets of Calcutta. I have heard one of these gentlemen preach in Memphis that in every village of India there is a pond full of the bones of little babies.

What have the Hindus done to these disciples of Christ that every Christian child is taught to call the Hindus "vile wretches," and the most horrible devils on earth?

Part of the Sunday School education for children here consists in teaching them to hate everybody who is not a Christian, and the Hindu especially; so that from their very childhood they may be induced to subscribe their pennies to the missions.

If not for truth's sake, for the sake of the morality of their own children, the Christian missionaries ought not to allow such things to go on. Is it any wonder that such children grow up to be ruthless and cruel men and women?

The greater a preacher can paint the tortures of eternal hell, the fire that is burning there, the brimstone, the higher is his position among the orthodox.

A servant girl in the employ of a friend of mine had to be sent to a lunatic asylum as a result of her attending

what they call here the revivalist preaching. The dose of hell fire and brimstone was too much for her.

Look again at the books published in Madras against the Hindu religion. If a Hindu writes one such line against the Christian religion, the missionaries will cry fire and vengeance.

My countrymen, I have been more than a year in this country. I have seen almost every corner of their society, and, after comparing notes, let me tell you that neither are we "devils" as the missionaries tell the world we are, nor are they "angels" as they claim to be. The less the missionaries talk of immorality, infanticide, and the evils of the Hindu marriage system, the better for them. There may be actual pictures of some countries before which all the imaginary missionary pictures of Hindu society will fade away into light.

But my mission in life is not to be a paid reviler. I shall be the last man to claim perfection for Hindu society. No man is more conscious of the defects that are therein, of the evils that have grown up under centuries of misfortunes. If, foreign friends, you come with genuine sympathy to help and not to destroy, God-speed to you. But if by abuses incessantly hurled against the head of a prostrate race in season and out of season you mean only the triumphant assertion of the moral superiority of your own nation, let me tell you plainly if such a comparison be instituted with any amount of justice, the Hindus will be found head and shoulder above all other nations in the world as a moral race.

In India religion was never shackled. No man was ever challenged in the selection of his "Ishtadevata," or his sect or his preceptor, and religion grew as it grew nowhere else. On the other hand, a fixed point was necessary

from which to allow this infinite variation in religion, and society was chosen as that point in India. As a result society became rigid and almost inmovable. For liberty is the only condition of growth.

On the other hand, in the West, the field of variation was society, and the constant point was religion. Conformity was the watchword, and even now is the watchword, of European religion, and each new departure has had to gain the least advantage only by wading through a river of blood. The result is a splendid social organization with a religion that never rose beyond the grossest materialistic conceptions.

To-day the West is awakening to its wants, and the "true self of man," the "spirits" is the watchword of the advanced school of Western theologians. The student of Sanskrit philosophy knows where the wind is blowing from, but it matters not whence the power comes so long as it brings new life.

In India new circumstances, at the same time, are persistently demanding a new adjustment of social organizations. For the last three-quarters of a century India has been bubbling over with reform societies and reformers. But alas! every one of them has proved a failure. They did not know the secret. They did not learn the great lesson to be learned. In their haste they have laid all the evils in our society at the door of religion, and, like the man in the story, wanting to kill the mosquito that sat on a friend's forehead, they have been trying to deal such heavy blows as would have killed man and the mosquito together. But in this case, fortunately, they only dashed themselves against immovable rocks and have been crushed out of existence in the shock of recoil. Glory unto those noble and unselfish souls who have struggled and failed in

their misdirected attempts. Those galvanic shocks of reformatory zeal were necessary to rouse the sleeping Leviathan. But they were entirely destructive, and not constructive, and as such they were mortal and have, therefore, died.

Let us bless them and profit by their experience. They did not learn the lesson that all growth is a growth from inside out, that all evolution is only a manifestation of a preceding involution. They did not know the seed can only assimilate the surrounding elements, and grow a tree in its own nature. Until the Hindu race becomes extinct and a new race takes possession of the land, such a thing can never be; try East or West India can never become Europe until she dies.

And will she die? This old mother of all that is noble or moral or spiritual; the land which the sages trod; the land in which God-like men still live and breathe? I will borrow the lantern of the Athenian sage and follow you, my brothers, through the cities and villages, plains and forests, of this broad world; show me such men in other lands, if you can. Truly have they said, the tree is known by its fruits. Go under every mango tree in India, pick up bushels of the worm-eaten, unripe, fallen fruits from the ground, and write hundreds of the most learned volumes on each one of them, still you have not described a single mango. Pluck a luscious, full-grown, juicy one from the tree, and now you know all that the mango is.

Similarly, these Man-Gods show what the Hindu religion is. They show the character, the power, and the possibilities of that racial tree which counts culture by centuries, and has borne the buffets of a thousand years of hurricane, and still stands with the unimpaired vigour of eternal youth.

Shall India die? Then from the world all spirituality will be extinct; all moral perfection will be extinct; all sweet-souled spmpathy for religion will be extinct; all ideality will be extinct, and in its place will reign the duality of lust and luxury as the male and female deities, with money as its priest, fraud, force and competition its ceremonies, and the human soul its sacrifice. Such a thing can never be. The power of suffering is infinitely greater than the power of doing; the power of love is of infinitely greater potency than the power of hatred. Those that think that the present revival of Hinduism is only a manifestation of patriotic impulse are deluded.

First let us study this quaint phenomenon.

Is it not curious that, whilst under the terrific onset of modern scientific research, all the old forts of Western dogmatic religions are crumbling into dust; whilst the sledge-hammer blows of modern science are pulverizing the porcelain mass of systems whose foundation is either in faith or in belief or in the majority of votes of church synods; whilst Western theology is at its wits' end to accommodate itself to the ever-rising tide of aggressive modern thought; whilst in all other sacred books the texts have been stretched to their utmost tension, under the ever-increasing pressure of modern thought, and the majority of them have been broken and stored away in lumber rooms; whilst the vast majority of the thoughtful Western humanity have broken asunder all their ties with the church, and are drifting about in a sea of unrest,—the religions which have drunk the water of life at that fountain-head of light—the Vedas—Hinduism and Buddhism alone are reviving?

The restless Western atheist or agnostic finds in the Gita or in the Dhammapada the only place where his soul can anchor.

The tables have been turned, and the Hindu, who saw through tears of despair his ancient homestead covered with incendiary fire ignited by unfriendly hands, now sees when the search-light of modern thought has dispersed the smoke, that his home is the one that is standing in all its strength, and that all the rest have either vanished or are being built anew after the Hindu plan. He has wiped off his tears, and has found that the axe that tried to cut down to the roots, the "Urdhva mulam adhah sakham asvatham prahuravyayam" has proved the merciful knife of the surgeon.

He has found that he has neither to torture text nor commit any other form of intellectual dishonesty to save his religion. Nay, he may call all that is weak in his scriptures, weak because they were meant to be so by the ancient sages,—to help the weak,—under the theory of "Arundhati darsana nyaya." Thanks to the ancient sages who have discovered such an all-pervading, ever-expanding system of religion that can accommodate all that has been discovered in the realm of matter, and all that is to be known. He has begun to appreciate them anew, and discover anew that those discoveries which have proved so disastrous to every limited little scheme of religion are but rediscoveries, in the plane of intellect and sense-consciousness, of truths which his ancestors had discovered ages ago in the higher plane of intuition and superconsciousness.

He has not, therefore, had to give up anything, nor go about seeking for anything anywhere, but it will be enough for him if he can utilize only a little from the infinite store

he has inherited, and apply it to his needs. And that he has begun to do, and will do more and more. Is this not the real cause of this revival?

Young men of Bengal to you I especially appeal.

Brethren: We know to our shame that most of the real evils for which the foreign races abuse the Hindu nation are only owing to us. We have been the cause of bringing many undeserved calumnies on the head of the other races in India. But glory unto God, we have been fully awakened to it, and with His blessings, we will not only cleanse ourselves but help the whole of India to attain the ideals preached in the religion eternal.

Let us wipe off first that mark which nature always puts on the forehead of a slave—the stain of jealousy. Be jealous of none. Be ready to lend a hand to every worker of good.

Send a good thought for every being in the three worlds.

Let us take our stand on the one central truth in our religion—the common heritage of the Hindus, the Buddhists and the Jains alike—the spirit of man, the Atman of man, the immortal, birthless, all-prevading, eternal soul of man, whose glories the Vedas cannot themselves express; before whose majesty the universe with its galaxy upon galaxy of suns and stars and nebulæ is as a drop. Every man or woman, nay from the highest Devas to the worm that crawls under your feet is such a spirit evoluted or involuted. The difference is not in kind, but in degree.

This infinite power of the spirit brought to bear upon matter evolves material development, made to act upon thought evolves intellectuality, and made to act upon itself makes of man a god.

First, let us be gods and then help others to be gods. "Be and make," Let this be our motto. Say not man is a sinner. Tell him that he is a god. Even if there were a devil, it would be our duty to remember God always and not the devil.

If the room is dark, the constant feeling and complaining of the darkness will not take it off. But bring in the light. Let us know that all that is negative, all that is destructive, all that is mere criticism, is bound to pass away; it is the positive, the affirmative, the constructive that is immortal, that will remain for ever. Let us say "we are" and "God is," and "We are God," "Sivoham," "Sivoham," and march on. Not matter but spirit. All that has name and form is subject to all that has none. This is the eternal truth the Srutis preach. Bring in the light, the darkness will vanish of itself. Let the lion of Vedanta roar, the foxes will fly to their holes. Throw the ideas broadcast, and let the result take care of itself. Let us put the chemicals together, the crystallization will take its own course. Bring forth the power of the spirit and pour it over the length and breadth of India, and all that is necessary will come by itself.

Manifest the divinity within you, and everything will be harmoniously arranged around it. Remember the illustration of "Indra" and "Virochana" in the Vedas; both were taught their divinity, but the Asura Virochana took his body for his God. Indra, being a Deva, understood that the "Atman" was meant. You are the children of Indra. You are the descendants of the Devas. Matter can never be your God; body can never be your God.

India will be raised—not with the power of the flesh, but with the power of the spirit; not with the flag of

destruction but with the flag of peace and love, the garb of the Sannyasin; not by the power of wealth, but by the power of the begging bowl. Say not that you are weak. The spirit is omnipotent. Look at that handful of young men called into existence by the divine touch of Rama Krishna's feet. They have preached the message from Assam to Sindh, from the Himalayas to Cape Comorin. They have crossed the Himalayas at a height of twenty thousand feet over snow and ice on foot, and penetrated into the mysteries of Thibet. They have begged their bread, covered themselves with rags; they have been persecuted, followed by the police, kept in prison, and at last set free when the Government was convinced of their innocence.

They are now twenty. Make them two thousand to-morrow, young men of Bengal. Your country requires it. The world requires it. Call up the divinity within you, which will enable you to bear hunger and thirst, heat and cold. Sitting in luxurious homes surrounded with all the comforts of life, and doling out a little amateur religion may be good for other lands, but India has a truer instinct. She intuitively detects the mask. You must give up. Be great. No great work can be done without sacrifice. The Purusha Himself sacrificed Himself to create this world. Lay down your comforts, your pleasures, your names, fame or position, nay even your lives, and make the bridge of human chains over which millions will cross this ocean of life. Bring all the forces of good together. Do not care under what banner you march. Do not care what be your colour—green, blue, or red, but mix all the colours up and produce that intense glow of white, the colour of love. Ours is to work. The results will take care of themselves. If any social institution stands in the way of your becom-

ing God, it will give way before the power of spirit. I do not see into the future; nor do I care to see. But one vision I see clear as life before me, that the ancient mother has awakened once more, and is sitting on her throne, rejuvenated, more glorious than ever. Proclaim her to all the world with the voice of peace and benediction.

KARMA-YOGA*

ACCORDING to the *Sânkhya* philosophy there are in nature three kinds of forces, called in Sanskrit—*Sattva*, *Rajas*, and *Tamas*. These as manifested in the physical world are what we may call attraction, repulsion, and the control of the two. *Sattva* is what exercises the control, *Rajas* is the repulsion, while *Tamas* is the attraction. *Tamas* is typified as darkness or inactivity; *Rajas* is activity, where each particle is trying to fly off from the attracting centre; and *Sattva* is the equilibrium of the two, giving a due balancing of both.

Now in every man there are these three forces; in each of us we find that sometimes the *Tamas* prevails; we become lazy; we cannot move; we are inactive, weighed down by certain ideas or by mere dullness. At other times activity prevails; we try as it were to fly off the centre; then again, at other times that calm balancing of both these temperaments, so to say,—the *Sattva*—prevails. Again in different men a different one of these forces is generally predominant. The characteristic of one man is inactivity, dullness and laziness; the characteristic of another man is activity, power, manifestation of energy; and in a third man we may find the sweetness, the calmness and the gentleness which are due to the balancing of both action and inaction. So in all creation—in animals, in plants, and in men—we find the more or less typical manifestation of all these different forces.

---

* The Notes of a Class Lesson held in New York on the 13th of December 1895.

Karma-Yoga has specially to deal with these three elements or tendencies of nature. By teaching us what they are and how we are to employ them, it helps us to do our work in life the better. Human society is a well ordered organization, in which there are different grades and states. We all know what is meant by morality; we all know what is meant by duty; but at the same time we find that in different countries the significance of morality varies greatly. What is regarded as moral in one country, in another may be perfectly immoral. For instance, in one country cousins may marry, in another it is thought to be very immoral to do so; in one country people may marry only once; in another many times; and so forth. So in all other departments of morality we find that the standard varies greatly: yet we have the idea that there must be a universal standard of morality.

So it is with duty. The idea of duty varies much among different nations: in one country, if a man does *not* do certain things, people will say he has acted wrongly, and if he does these very things in another country, people will still say that he did act rightly, and yet we know that there must be some universal idea of duty. In the same way, one class of society thinks that certain things are among its duty, and another class thinks quite the opposite, and would be horrified if it had to do those things.

Two ways are left open to us, either the way of the ignorant, who think that there is only one road to truth, and that all the others are wrong; or the way of the wise, who admit that according to the mental constitution, or the different planes of cultured existence in which men are, duty and morality may vary. So the important thing to know is that there are gradations of duty and of morality,

that what is the duty of one state of life, in one state of circumstances, will not and cannot be that of another.

The following example will serve to illustrate this :— All great teachers have taught "Resist not evil," have taught that the non-resisting of evil is the highest moral ideal. We all know that if, in the present state of the world, people try to carry out this doctrine, the whole social fabric would fall to pieces, society would be destroyed, the violent and the wicked would take possession of our property, and possibly take our lives also. Even one day of such non-resistance would lead to the utter dissolution of society. Yet, intuitively, in our heart of hearts we feel the truth of the teaching, "Resist not evil." This seems to us to be the highest ideal to aim at: yet to teach this doctrine only, would be equivalent to condemning a vast proportion of mankind. Not only so, it would be making men feel that they were always doing wrong, and cause scruples of conscience in relation to all their actions; it would weaken them, as that kind of constant self-disapproval and self-condemnation would breed more weakness than any other defect. To the man who has begun to hate himself, the gate to degeneration has already become wide open; and this is true with whole nations as well.

Our first duty is, then, not to hate ourselves; because to advance, we must have faith in ourselves first, and then in God. He who has no faith in himself can never have faith in God. Therefore the only alternative that remains to us is to recognize that duty, morality, and all these things vary under different circumstances; not that the man who resists evil is doing what is always and in itself wrong, but that in the different circumstances in which he is placed it may become his duty to do so.

Some of you have read, perhaps, the *Bhagavad-Gita*, and many of you in Western countries, may have felt astonished at the first chapter wherein our Sri Krishna calls Arjuna a hypocrite and a coward, on account of his refusal to fight, or offer resistance, because his adversaries were his friends and relatives,—his refusal on the plea that non-resistance was the highest ideal of love. There is a great lesson for us all to learn, that in all things the two extremes are alike; the extreme positive and the extreme negative are always similar: when the vibrations of light are too slow we do not see them, nor do we see them when they are too rapid; so also with sound; when very low in pitch we do not hear it, when very high we do not hear it either. Of like nature is the difference between resistance and non-resistance. One man does not resist because he is weak, lazy, and cannot; not because he will not; the other man knows that he can strike an irresistible blow if he likes, yet not only does not strike, but blesses his enemies. The one who, from weakness, resists not evil commits a sin, and cannot derive any benefit from his non-resistance; the other would equally surely commit a sin by offering resistance. Buddha gave up his throne and renounced his position; that was true renunciation; but there cannot be any question of renunciation in the case of a beggar who has nothing to renounce. We must always be careful about what we really mean when we speak of this non-resistance and ideal love. We must first take care to understand whether we have the power of resistance or not. Then, having the power, if we renounce it and do not resist, we are doing a grand act of love; but if we cannot resist, yet, at the same time, try to make it appear and ourselves believe that we are actuated by motives of the highest love, we are doing the exact opposite of what

is morally good. Arjuna became a coward at the sight of the mighty array against him; his "love" made him forget his duty towards his country and king. That is why Sri Krishna told him that he was a hypocrite: "Thou talkest like a wise man, but thy actions betray thee to be a coward; therefore stand up and fight."

Such is the central idea of the *Karma-Yoga.* The *Karma-Yogin* is the man who understands that the highest ideal is non-resistance, which is, indeed, the highest ideal and the most beautiful manifestation of power in actual possession, and he understands also that what is called the resisting of evil is but a step on the way towards the manifestation of the highest power which is non-resistance. Before reaching fittingly this highest ideal man's duty is to resist evil: let him work, let him fight, let him strike "straight from the shoulder." Only when he has gained the power to resist will non-resistance be a virtue.

I once met a man in my country whom I had known before as a very stupid, dull person who knew nothing and had not the desire to know anything, and was living the life of a brute. He asked me what he should do to know God, how he was to get free. "Can you tell a lie?" I asked him. "No," he replied. "Then you must learn to do so. It is better to tell a lie than to be a brute, or a log of wood; you are inactive; you are not certainly of the highest state, which is beyond all actions, calm and serene; you are too dull even to do something wicked." That was an extreme case, of course, and I was in joke with him; but what I meant was, that a man must be active, in order to pass through activity to perfect calmness. Inactivity should be avoided by all means. Activity always means resistance. Resist all evils, mental and physical, and when you have succeeded in resisting, then will the calmness of

non-resistance come. It is very easy to say "Hate not anybody, resist not any evil," but we all know what that invariably means. When the eyes of Society are turned towards us, we make a show of non-resistance, but in our hearts it is canker all the time. We feel the utter want of the calm of non-resistance; we feel that it would be better for us to resist. If you desire wealth and know that the whole world will tell you that he who aims at wealth is a very wicked man, you, naturally, do not dare to plunge into the struggle for wealth; yet, at the same time, the mind is running day and night after money. This is hypocrisy, and will serve no purpose. Plunge into the world, and then, after a time, when you have enjoyed and found hollow all that is in it, will renunciation come, then will calmness come. So fulfil your desire for power and everything else, and after you have fulfilled the desire, will come the time when you will know that these are all very little things; but until you have fulfilled this desire, until you have passed through that activity, it is impossible for you to come to that state of calmness and serenity which is characterised by sincere renunciation and honest non-resistance. These ideas of serenity and the calmness of self-surrender have been preached for thousands of years; everybody born has heard of them from his childhood, and yet we see very few in the world that have really reached that stage of moral perfection. I do not know if I have seen twenty persons in my life who were really calm and non-resisting, and I have travelled over half the world.

Every man should take up his own ideal and endeavour to accomplish it; that is a surer way of progress than taking up other men's ideals, which he can never hope to accomplish. For instance, we take a baby and at once give him the task of walking twenty miles; either the

baby dies, or one in a thousand will, if at all, crawl over the twenty miles to reach the end exhausted and half dead. That is, curiously enough, what we generally try to do with the world. All the men and women in any society are not of the same capacity. Each must have his or her own different ideals, and we have no right to sneer at any ideal. Let every one do the best he can to realise his own ideal; I should not be judged by yours, nor you by mine. The apple tree should not be judged by the standard of the oak, nor the oak by that of the apple. To judge the apple tree you must take the apple standard, and for the oak there is its own standard, and so with all of us.

Unity in variety is the plan of creation. However men and women may vary individually, there is unity in the background. The different individual characters and classes of men and women are natural variations in the law of creation. Hence we ought not to judge them by the same standard, or put the same ideal before them. Such a course creates only an unnatural struggle far other than profitable, and the result is that man begins to hate himself and is hindered from becoming truly religious and good.

In the Hindu system of morality we find that this fact has been recognized from very ancient times; and in their scriptures and books on ethics different rules are laid down for the different classes of men, as also for the householder, the *Sannyasin* (the man who has renounced the world) and the student. The life of every individual in *Karma*, according to the Hindu scriptures, is divided into several parts. The Hindu begins life as a student; then he marries and becomes a householder; then after becoming old he retires, and lastly he gives up the world and becomes a *Sannyasin*. To each of these stages of life certain

duties are allotted. No one of these stages of life is superior to the other; the life of the married man is quite as great as that of the man who is not married, but has devoted himself to some worthy work. The king on his throne is as great and glorious as the scavenger in the street. Take him off his throne, make him do the work of the scavenger and see how he fares. Take up the scavenger and see how he will rule. It is useless to say that the man who lives out of the world is a greater man than he who lives in the world; it is much more difficult to live in the world and worship God, than to give up the world and live a free and easy life of rest and retirement. The various stages of life have become shortened in India to two,—that of the householder and then of the preacher. The householder marries and carries on his duties as a citizen, and the duties of the other are to preach and to worship God. Now you will see whose life is the more difficult one. As I read on to you a few beautiful passages from the *Maha-Nirvana-Tantra*, which treats of this subject, you will see that it is a very difficult task for a man to be a householder, and perform all his duties perfectly.

"The householder should be devoted to God; the knowledge of God should be his goal of life. Yet he must work constantly, perform all his duties; whatever he does he must give it up to God."

It is the most difficult thing to do in this world, to work and not care for the result, to help a man and never think that he ought to be grateful to you, to do some good work and at the same time never look to see whether it brings you name or fame, or brings nothing at all. Even the most arrant coward becomes a brave man when the world begins to praise him. A fool can do heroic

deeds when the approbation of society is on him; but for a man to do constantly good works without courting or caring for the approbation of his fellow-men is, indeed, the highest sacrifice any man can perform. The great duty of the householder is to earn a living; but he must take care that he does not get it by telling lies, or by cheating, or by robbing others; and he must remember that his life is for the service of God, his life is for the service of the poor and the needy.

"Knowing that mother and father are the visible representatives of God, the householder always, and by all means, must please them. If the mother is pleased, and the father, God is pleased with that man. That child is really a good child who never speaks harsh words to his parents.

"Before parents one must not utter jokes, must not show restlessness, must not show anger or temper. Before mother or father, a child must bow down low, and he must stand up in their presence, and must not take a seat until they order him to sit.

"If the householder enjoys food and drink and clothes without first seeing that his mother and his father, his children, his wife, and his poor, are supplied, he is committing a sin. The mother and the father are the causes of this body, so a man must undergo a thousand troubles in order to do good to them.

"Even so is his duty to his wife; no man should scold his wife, and he must always maintain her as if she were his own mother. And even when he is in the greatest difficulties and troubles, he must not show anger to his wife.

"He who thinks of another woman besides his wife—if touches her mentally with the least part of his mind—

that man goes to dark hell. Even in private no man ought to touch another woman, or her cloths; even when she is not there the cloths owned by any woman other than his wife should not be touched.

"Before women he must not talk improper language, and never brag of his powers. He must not say 'I have done this, and I have done that.'

"The householder must always please his wife with wealth, clothes, love, faith, and words like nectar, and never do anything to disturb her. That man who has succeeded in getting the love of a chaste wife has succeeded in his religion and has all the virtues."

The following are duties towards children :—

"A son should be well taken care of until he is four years of age; after that he should be educated. When he is 20 years of age the father must not think of him as a little boy; he then is his own equal, being a householder himself. Exactly in the same manner the daughter should be brought up, and with the greatest care should be educated. And when she marries, the father ought to give her jewels and wealth.

"Then the duty of the man is towards his brothers and sisters, and towards the children of his brothers and sisters; if they are poor, and towards his other relatives, his friends and his servants. Then his duties are towards the people of the same village, and the poor, and any one that comes to him for help. Having sufficient means, if the householder does not take care to give gifts to his relatives and to the poor, know him to be only a brute; he is not a human being.

"Excessive care in food, in clothes, and in self-love, and taking excessive care in beautifying the body and parting the hair should be avoided. The householder must be

pure in heart and clean in body, always active and always ready for work.

"To his enemies the householder must be a hero. Them he must resist. That is the duty of the householder. He must not sit down in a corner and weep, and talk nonsense about non-resistance. If he does not show himself a hero to his enemies he has not done his duty, and to his friends and relatives, he must be as gentle as a lamb.

"It is the duty of the householder not to pay reverence to the wicked; because, if he reverences the wicked people of the world, he patronises wickedness; and it will be a great mistake if he disregards those who are worthy of respect,—the good people. He must not be gushing in his friendships; he must not go out making friends everywhere; he must watch the actions of the men he wants to make friends with, and their dealings with other men, reason upon them, and then make friends.

"These three things he must not talk of. He must not talk in public of his own fame; he must not preach his own name or his own powers; he must not talk of his wealth, or of anything that has been mentioned to him privately.

"If he has committed some mistake, and if he has engaged himself in a work which is sure to fail, whether big or small, he must not talk of these things, or make them public. What is the use of talking of one's mistakes to the world? They cannot be undone. For what he has done he must suffer; he, as a householder, must try and do better. The world sympathises only with the strong and the powerful.

"A man must not say he is poor, or that he is wealthy—he must not brag of his wealth. Let him keep his own counsel; this is his religious duty. This is not mere

worldly wisdom; if a man does not do so, he may be held to be immoral."

The householder is the basis, the prop, of the whole society; he is the principal earner. Everybody—the poor' the weak, the children and the women who do not work—all live upon the householder; so there must be certain duties that he has to perform, and these duties must make him feel strong to perform them, and not make him think that he is doing things beneath his ideal. Therefore, if he has done something weak, or has committed some mistake, he must not say so in public; and if he is engaged in some enterprise and knows he is sure to fail in it, he must not speak of it. Such self-exposure is not only uncalled for, but also unnerves the man and makes him unfit for the performance of his legitimate duties in life. At the same time, he must struggle hard to acquire these things—firstly knowledge, and secondly wealth. It is his duty, and if he does not do his duty he is nobody. A householder who does not struggle to get wealth is immoral. If he is lazy, and content to lead a lazy life, he is immoral, because upon him depend hundreds. If he gets riches hundreds of others will be thereby supported.

If there were not in this city hundreds who had striven to become rich, and who had acquired wealth, where would all his civilisation, and these almshouses and great houses be?

Going after wealth in such a case is not bad, because that wealth is for distribution. The householder is the centre of life and society. It is a worship for him to acquire and spend wealth nobly, for the householder who struggles to get rich by *good* means and for *good* purposes is doing practically the same thing for the attainment of salvation as the anchorite does in his cell when he is pray-

ing, for in them we see only the different aspects of the same virtue of self-surrender and self-sacrifice prompted by the feelings of devotion to God and to all that is His.

" He must struggle to acquire a good name by all means ; and he must give up these things—he must not gamble ; he must not move in the companionship of the wicked ; he must not tell lies, and must not be the cause of trouble to others."

Often people enter into things they have not the means to accomplish, and the result is that they cheat others to attain their own ends. Then there is in all thing the time factor to be taken into consideration ; what at one time might be a failure, would perhaps, at another time, be a very great success.

" The householder must speak truth, and speak gently, using words which people like, which will do good to others ; neither must he brag of his own doings, nor talk of the business of other men.

" The householder by constructing reservoirs for holding water, by planting trees on the roadsides, by establishing almshouses for men and animals, by making roads and building bridges, goes towards the same goal as the greatest *Yogin*."

This is one part of the doctrine of *Karma-Yoga*—activity, the duty of the householder. There is a line later on, where it says that " if the householder dies in battle, fighting for his country or his religion, he comes to the same goal as the *Yogin* by meditation," showing thereby that what is duty for one is not duty for another ; at the same time, it does not say that this duty is lowering and the other elevating ; each duty has its own place and fitness, and, according to the circumstances in which we are placed, so must we perform our duties.

One idea comes out of all this, the condemnation of all weakness. This is a particular idea in all our teachings which I like, either in philosophy, or in religion or in work. If you read the Vedas you will find this word always repeated—"fearlessness"—fear nothing. Fear is a sign of weakness. A man must go about his duties without taking notice of the sneers and the ridicule of the world. If a man gives up and goes out of the world to worship God, he must not think that those who live in the world and work for the good of the world are not worshipping God; neither must those who live in the world, for wife and children, think that those who give up the world are low vagabonds. Each is great in his own place.

This thought I will illustrate by a story.

A certain king used to inquire of all the *Sannyasins* that came to his country, which is the greater man—he who gives up the world and becomes a *Sannyasin*, or he who lives in the world and performs his duties as a householder. Many wise men tried to solve this problem. Some asserted that the *Sannyasin* was the greater, upon which the king demanded that they should prove their assertion. When they could not, he ordered them to marry and become householders. Then others came and said "The householder who performs his duties is the greater man." Of them, too the king demanded proofs. When they could not give them he made them also settle down as householders. At last there came a young *Sannyasin* and the king put the same question to him. He answered "Each, O king, is equally great in his place." "Prove this to me," said the king. "I will prove it to you," said the *Sannyasin*, "But you must first come and live as I do for a few days, that I may be able to prove to you what I say." The king consented and followed the *Sannyasin* out

of his own territory and passed through many territories, until they came to another kingdom. In the capital of that kingdom a great ceremony was going on. The king and the *Sannyasin* heard the sound of drums and music, and criers and the people were assembled in the streets in gala dress, and a great proclamation was being made. The king and the *Sannyasin* stood there to see what was going on. The crier was saying that the princess, the daughter of the king of that country, was going to choose a husband from among those assembled before her.

It was an old custom in India for princesses to choose husbands in this way, and apparently each one of them had certain ideas of the sort of man she wanted for a husband; some would have the handsomest man; others would have only the most learned; others would have the richest; and so on. The princess, in the most splendid array, was carried on a throne, and the announcement was made by criers that the princess so-and-so was about to choose a husband. Then all the princes of the neighbourhood put on their bravest attire and presented themselves before her. Sometimes they, too, had their own criers to enumerate their advantages, and the reasons why they hoped the princess would choose them. The princess was taken round and looked at them and heard what they had to offer, and if she was not pleased she asked her bearers to move on, and no more notice was taken of the rejected suitors. If, however, the princess was pleased with any one of them, she threw a garland upon him and he became her husband.

The princess of the country to which our king and the *Sannyasin* had come was having one of these interesting ceremonies. She was the most beautiful princess of the world, and the husband of the princess would be ruler of the

kingdom after her father's death. The idea of this princess was to marry, the handsomest man, but she could not find the right one to please her. Several times these meetings had taken place, and yet the princess had not selected any one. This meeting was the most splendid of all; more people than ever had come to it, and it was a most gorgeous scene. The princess came in on a throne and the bearers carried her from place to place. She does not seem to care for any one even on this occasion, and everyone has almost become disappointed that this meeting, too, is to be broken up without any one being chosen as the husband of the princess. Just then comes a young man, a *Sannyasin* as handsome as if the sun had come down to the earth, and he stands in one corner of the assembly seeing what is going on. The throne with the princess comes near him, and as soon as she sees the beautiful *Sannyasin*, she stops and throws the garland over him. The young *Sannyasin* seizes the garland and throws it off, exclaiming "What nonsense do you mean by that? I am a *Sannyasin*, what is marriage to me"? The king of that country thinks that perhaps this man is poor, so does not dare to marry the princess, so he says to him "with my daughter goes half my kingdom now, and the whole kingdom after my death," and puts the garland again on the *Sannyasin*. The young man throws it off once more saying "What nonsense is this? I do not want to marry," and walks quickly away from the assembly.

Now the princess fell so much in love with this young man that she said "I must marry this man or I shall die;" and she went after him to bring him back. Then our other *Sannyasin*, who had brought our king there because of the controversy, said to the king—"King, let us follow this pair;" so they walked after then, but at a good dis-

tance behind. The young *Sannyasin* who had refused to marry the princess, walked out into the country for several miles, when he came to a forest, and struck into it, and the princess followed him, and the other two followed them. Now this young *Sannyasin* was well acquainted with that forest, and knew all the intricate passages in it, and suddenly he jumped into one of these and disappeared and the princess could not discover him. After trying for a long time to find him, she sat down under a tree and began to weep, for she did not know the way to get out of the forest again. Then our king and the other *Sannyasin* came up to her and said, "Do not weep, we will show you the way out of this forest, but it is too dark for us to find it now. Here is a big tree; let us rest under it, and in the morning we will go early and show you the road to get out. Now a little bird and his wife and three little baby-birds lived on that tree in a nest. This little bird looked down and saw the three people under the tree, and said to his wife "My dear, what shall be done? Here are some guests in the house, and it is winter, and we have no fire?" So he flew away and got a bit of burning firewood in his beak and dropped it before the guests and they added fuel to it and made a blazing fire. But the little bird was not satisfied; he said again to his wife "My dear, what shall we do, there is nothing to give these people to eat, and they are hungry and we are householders; it is our duty to feed anyone who comes to the house. I must do what I can, I will give them my body." So he plunged down into the midst of the fire and perished. The guests saw him falling and tried to save him, but he was too quick for them, and dashed into the fire and was killed. The little bird's wife saw what her husband did, and she said: "Here are three persons and only one little bird for them

to eat; it is not enough; it is my duty as a wife not to let my husband's effort be in vain; let them have my body also" and she plunged down into the fire and was burned to death. Then the three baby-birds, when they saw what was done, and that there was still not enough food for the three guests, said: "Our parents have done what they could and still it is not enough; it is our duty to carry on the work of our parents; let our bodies go too;" and they all dashed down into the fire. The three people could not eat these birds, and they were amazed at what they saw. Somehow or other they passed the night without food, and in the morning the king and the *Sannyasin* showed the princess the way, and she went back to her father. Then the *Sannyasin* said to the king:—"King, you have seen that each is great in his own place. If you want to live in the world, live like those birds, ready at any moment to sacrifice yourself for others. If you want to renounce the world be like that young man, to whom the most beautiful woman and a kingdom were as nothing. If you want to be a householder, hold your life a sacrifice for the welfare of others; and if you choose the life of renunciation, do not even look at beauty and money and power. Each is great in his own place, but the duty of the one is not the duty of the other."

After the battle of Kurukshetra, the five Pandava brothers performed a great sacrifice and made very large gifts to the poor. All the people expressed amazement at the greatness and richness of the sacrifice, and said that such a sacrifice the world had never seen before. But, after the ceremony, there came a little mungoose; half his body was golden and the other half was brown, and he began to roll on the floor of the sacrificial hall. Then he said to those round "You are all liars; this is no sacrifice."

"What!" they exclaimed "you say this is no sacrifice; do you not know how money and jewels were poured out upon the poor and everyone became rich and happy? This was the most wonderful sacrifice any man ever performed." But the mungoose said thus:—There was once a little village, aud in it there dwelt a poor Brahmin, with his wife, his son and his son's wife. They were very poor and lived on alms gained by preaching and teaching, for which men occasionally made small gifts to them. There came in that land a three years' famine, and the poor Brahmin suffered more than ever. At last for five days the family starved, but on the sixth day the father brought home a little barley flour which he had been fortunate enough to find, and he divided it into four parts, one for each of them. They prepared it for their meal and just as they were about to eat it, a knock came at the door. The father opened it and there stood a guest. Now in India a guest is sacred, he is as God for the time being and must be treated as such. So the poor Brahmin said. "Come in, Sir; you are welcome." He set before the guest his own portion of food, and the later quickly ate it up, and then said "Oh, sir, you have killed me; I have been starving for ten days and this little bit has but increased my hunger." Then the wife said to her husband "Give him my share," but the husband said "Not so." The wife, however, insisted, saying "Here is a poor man and it is our duty as householders to see that he is fed and it is my duty as a wife to give him my portion, seeing that you have no more to offer him." Then she gave her share to the guest and he ate it up and said he was still burning with hunger. So the son said "Take my portion also, it is the duty of a son to help his father to fulfil his obligations." The guest ate that, but remained still unsatisfied, so the

son's wife gave him her portion also. That was sufficient and the guest departed, blessing them. That night those four people died of starvation. A few granules of that flour had fallen on the ground, and when I rolled on them half of my body became golden, as you see it. Since then I have been all over the world, hoping to find another sacrifice like that, but never have I found one; nowhere else has the other half of my body been turned into gold. That is why I say this is no sacrifice.

This idea of charity is going out of India; grand men are becoming less and less. When I was first learning English I read an English story book, where the first story was about a dutiful boy who had gone out to work and had given some of his money to his old mother, and this was praised in three or four pages. What was that? No Hindu boy could ever understand that story. Now I understand it when I hear the Western idea—every man for himself. And some men take everything, and fathers and mothers, and wives and children go to the wall. That should never and nowhere be the ideal of the householder.

Now you see what *Karma-Yoga* means; even at the point of death to help anyone, without asking questions. Be cheated millions of times and never ask a question, and never think of what you are doing. Never vaunt of your gifts to the poor or expect their gratitude, but rather be grateful to them for giving you the occasion of practising charity on them. Thus it is plain that to be an ideal householder is a much more difficult task than to be an ideal *Sannyasin;* the true life of work is, indeed, harder than the equally true life of renunciation.

METAPHYSICS IN INDIA: REINCARNATION.*

——:o:——

'Both you and I have passed through many births ;
You know them not, I know them all.'—*Bhagavad Gita.*

OF the many riddles that have perplexed the intellect of man in all climes and times, the most intricate is himself. Of the myriad mysteries that have called forth his energies to struggle for solution, from the very dawn of history, the most mysterious is his own nature. It is at once the most insoluble enigma and the problem of all problems. As the starting-point and the repository of all we know and feel and do, there never has been, nor will be, a time when man's own nature will cease to demand his best and foremost attention.

Though through hunger after that truth, which of all others has the most intimate connection with his very existence ; though through an all-absorbing desire for an inward standard by which to measure the outward universe ; though through the absolute and inherent necessity of finding a fixed point in a universe of change, man has sometimes clutched at handfuls of dust for gold, and even, when urged on by a voice higher than reason or intellect, he has many times failed rightly to interpret the real meaning of the divinity within—still, there never was a time since the search began when some race, or some individuals, did not hold aloft the lamp of truth.

* *Metaphysical Magazine, March*, 1895.

Taking a one-sided, cursory, and prejudiced view of the surroundings and the unessential details, sometimes disgusted also with the vagueness of many schools and sects, and often, alas! driven to the opposite extreme by the violent superstitions of organised priestcraft—men have not been wanting, especially among advanced intellects, in either ancient or modern times, who not only gave up the search in despair, but declared it fruitless and useless. Philosophers might fret and sneer, and priests ply their trade even at the point of the sword; but truth comes to those alone who worship at her shrine for her sake only, without fear and without shop-keeping.

Light comes to individuals through the conscious efforts of their intellect: it comes slowly, though, to the whole race, through unconscious percolations. The philosophers show the volitional struggles of great minds: history reveals the silent process of permeation through which truth is absorbed by the masses.

Of all the theories that have been held by man about himself, that of a soul entity separate from the body and immortal has been the most widespread; and among those that held the belief in such a soul, the majority of the thoughtful had always believed also in its pre-existence.

At present the greater portion of the human race, having organised religion, believe in it; and many of the best thinkers in the most favoured lands, though nurtured in religions avowedly hostile to every idea of pre-existence of the soul, have endorsed it. Hinduism and Buddhism have it for their foundation; the educated classes among the ancient Egyptians believed in it; the ancient Persians arrived at it; the Greek phiosophers made it the corner-stone of their philosophy; the Pharisees among the

Hebrews accepted it, and the Sufis among the Mahomedans almost universally acknowledged its truth.

There must be peculiar surroundings which generate and foster certain forms of belief among nations. It required ages for the ancient races to arrive at any idea about a part even of the body surviving after death ; it took ages more to come to any rational idea about this something which persists and lives apart from the body. It was only when the idea was reached of an entity whose connection with the body was only for a time, and among those nations only who arrived at such a conclusion that the unavoidable question arose, Whither? whence ?

The ancient Hebrews never disturbed their equanimity by questioning themselves about the soul. With the death ended all. Karl Heckel justly says, " Though it is true that in the Old Testament, preceding the exile, the Hebrews distinguish a life principle, different from the body, which is sometimes called ' Nephesh,' or ' Ruakh,' or ' Neshama,' yet all these words correspond rather to the idea of breath than to that of spirit or soul. Also in the writings of the Palestinean Jews, after the exile, there is never made mention of an individual immortal soul, but always only of a life-breath emanating from God, which, after the body is dissolved, is re-absorbed into the Divine ' Ruakh.' "

The ancient Egyptians and the Chaldeans had peculiar beliefs of their own about the *soul*, but their ideas about this living part after death must not be confused with those of the ancient Hindu, the Persian, the Greek, or any other Aryan race. There was from the earliest times a broad distinction between the " Aryas " and the (non-Sanskrit speaking) " Mlechhas " in the conception of the soul. Externally it was typified by their disposal of the

dead—the "Mlechhas" mostly trying their best to *preserve* the dead bodies, either by careful burial or by the more elaborate processes of mummifying, and the Aryas generally burning their dead.

Herein lies the key to a great secret—the fact that no Mlechha race, whether Egyptian, Assyrian, or Babylonian, ever attained to the idea of the soul as a separate entity which can live *independent* of the body, without the help of the *Aryas*, especially of the Hindus.

Although Herodotus states that the Egyptians were the first to conceive the idea of the immortality of the soul, and states as a doctrine of the Egyptians "that the soul, after the dissolution of the body, enters again and again into a creature that comes to life; then that the soul wanders through all the animals of the land and the sea and through all the birds, and finally after three thousand years returns to a human body," yet modern researches into Egyptology have as yet found no trace of metempsychosis in the popular Egyptian religion. On the other hand, the most recent researches of Maspero, A. Erman, and other eminent Egytologists tend to confirm the supposition that the doctrine of palingenesis was not at home with the Egyptians.

With the ancient Egyptians the soul was only a double, having no individuality of its own, and never able to break its connection with the body. It persists only so long as the body lasts, and if by chance the corpse is destroyed, the departed soul must suffer a second death and annihilation. The soul after death was allowed to roam freely all over the world, but always returning to where the corpse was at night, always miserable, always hungry and thirsty, always extremely desirous to enjoy life once more, and never being able to fulfil it. If any

part of its old body was injured, the soul was always injured in those parts, and this idea explains the solicitude of the ancient Egyptians to preserve their dead. At first the deserts were chosen as the burial-place, where the dryness of the air did not allow the body to perish soon, thus granting to the departed soul a long lease of existence.

In course of time one of the gods discovered the process of making mummies, through which the devout hoped to preserve the dead bodies of their ancestors almost an infinite length of time, thus securing the departed ghost immortality, however miserable it might be.

The perpetual regret for the world, in which the soul can take no further interest, never ceased to torture the deceased. "Oh, my brother," exclaims the departed, "withhold not thyself from drinking and eating, from drunkenness, from love, from all enjoyments, from following thy desire by night and by day; put not sorrow within thy heart, for what are the years of man upon earth? The West is a land of sleep and of heavy shadows, a place wherein the inhabitants, when once installed, slumber on in their mummy forms, never more waking to see their brethren; never more to recognise their fathers and mothers with hearts forgetful of their wives and children. The living water, which earth giveth to all who dwell upon it, is for me stagnant and dead; that water floweth to all who are on earth, while for me it is but liquid putrefaction, this water that is mine. Since I came into this funeral valley I know not where nor what I am. Give me to drink of running water . . . let me be placed by the edge of the water with my face to the North, that the breeze may caress me and my heart be refreshed from its sorrow."

Among the Chaldees also, although they did not specuate so much as the Egyptians as to the condition of the soul

after death, the soul is still a double and is bound to its sepulchre. They also could not conceive of a state without this physical body, and expected a resurrection of the corpse again to life; and though the goddess Ishtar, after great perils and adventures, procured the resurrection of her shepherd husband, Dumuzi, the son of Ea and Damkina, "the most pious votaries pleaded in vain from temple to temple for the resurrection of their dead friends."

Thus we find that the ancient Egyptians or Chaldeans never could entirely dissociate the idea of the soul from the corpse of the departed or the sepulchre. The state of earthly existence was best after all, and the departed are always longing to have a chance once more to renew it, and the living are fervently hoping to help them in prolonging the existence of the miserable double, and striving the best they can to help them.

This is not the soil out of which any higher knowledge of the soul could spring. In the first place it is grossly materialistic, and even then it is one of terror and agony. Frightened with almost innumerable powers of evil, and with hopeless, agonised efforts to avoid them, the souls of the living, like their ideas of the souls of the departed—wander all over the world though they might—could never get beyond the sepulchre and the crumbling corpse.

We must turn now for the source of the higher ideas of the soul to another race—whose god was an all-merciful, all-pervading Being, manifesting himself through various bright, benign, and helpful *Devas*; the first of all the human race who addressed their god as Father—"Oh, take me by the hands even as a father takes his dear son;" with whom life was a hope and not a despair; whose religion was not the intermittent groans escaping the lips of an agonized man during the intervals of a life of mad ex-

citement; whose ideas come to us redolent with the aroma of the field and forest; whose songs of praise, spontaneous, free, joyful, like the songs which burst forth from the throats of the birds when they hail this beautiful world illuminated by the first rays of the lord of the day, come down to us through the vista of eighty centuries even now as fresh calls from heaven—we turn to the ancient Aryas.

"Place me in that deathless, undecaying world, where is the light of heaven, and everlasting lustre shines;" "Make me immortal in that realm where dwells the King Vivasvan's son, where is the secret shrine of heaven;" "Make me immortal in that realm where they move even as they list;" "In the third sphere of inmost heaven, where worlds are full of light, make me immortal in that realm of bliss:" these are the prayers of the Aryas in their oldest record,—the *Rigvedasanhita*.

We find at once a whole world of difference between the Mlechha and the Arya ideals. To the one this body and this world are all that are real, and all that are desirable. A little life fluid which flies off from the body at death to feel torture and agony at the loss of the enjoyments of the senses can, they fondly hope, be brought back if the body is carefully preserved; and a corpse became more an object of care than the living man. The other found out that that which left the body was the real man, and when separated from the body it enjoyed a state of bliss higher than it ever enjoyed when in the body. And they hastened to annihilate the corrupted corpse by burning it.

Here we find the germ out of which a true idea of the soul could come. Here it was—where the real man was not the body, but the soul; where all ideas of an inseparable connection between the real man and the body were

utterly absent—that a noble idea of the freedom of the soul could rise. And it was when the Aryas penetrated even beyond the shining cloth of the body with which the departed soul was enveloped, and found its real nature of a formless individual unit principle that the question inevitably arose, Whence?

It was in India and among the Aryas that the doctrine of the pre-existence, the immortality, and the individuality of the soul first arose. Recent researches in Egypt have failed to show any trace of the doctrines of an independent and individual soul existing before and after the earthly phase of existence. Some of the mysteries were no doubt in possession of this idea, but in those it has been traced to India.

"I am convinced," says Karl Heckel, "that the deeper we enter into the study of the Egyptian religion, the clearer it is shown that the doctrine of metempsychosis was entirely foreign to the popular Egyptian religion; and that even that which single mysteries possessed of it was not inherent to the Osiris teachings, but derived from Hindu sources."

Later on we find the Alexandrian Jews imbued with the doctrine of an individual soul, and the Pharisees of the time of Jesus, as already stated, not only had faith in an individual soul, but believed in its wanderings through various bodies; and thus it is easy to find how Christ was recognised as the incarnation of an older prophet, and Jesus himself directly asserted that John the Baptist was the prophet Elias come back again. "If ye will receive it, this is Elias, which was for to come."—Matt. xi., 14.

The idea of a soul and of its individuality among the Hebrews evidently came through the higher mystical teachings of the Egyptians, who in their turn derived it from

India. And that it should come through Alexandria is significant, as the Buddhistic records clearly show Buddhist missionary activity in Alexandria and Asia Minor.

Pythagoras is said to have been the first Greek who taught the doctrine of palingenesis among the Hellenes. As an Aryan race, already burning their dead and believing in the doctrine of an individual soul, it was easy for the Greeks to accept the doctrine of reincarnation, through the Pythagorean teachings. According to Apulejus, Pythagoras had come to India, where he had been instructed by the Brahmins.

So far we have learned that wherever the soul was held to be an individual, the real man, and not a vivifying part of the body only, the doctrine of its pre-existence had inevitably come, and that externally those nations that believed in the independent individuality of the soul had almost always signified it by burning the bodies of the departed; though one of the ancient Aryan races, the Persian, developed a peculiar method of disposing of the bodies of the dead at an early period, and without any Semitic influence; the very name by which they call their "towers of silence" comes from the root *Dah* = to burn.

In short, the races who did not pay much attention to the analysis of their own nature never went beyond the material body as their all in all, and even when driven by higher light to penetrate beyond, they only came to the conclusion that somehow or other, at some distant period of time, this body will become incorruptible.

On the other hand, that race which spent the best part of its energies in the inquiry into the nature of man as a thinking being—the Indo-Aryan—soon found out that beyond this body, beyond even the shining body which

their forefathers longed after, is the real man, the principle, the individual who clothes himself with this body, and then throws it off when torn. Was such a principle created? If creation means something coming out of nothing, their answer is a decisive "No." This soul is without birth and without death; it is not a compound or combination but an independent individual, and as such it cannot be created or destroyed. It is only travelling through various states.

Naturally, the question arises, where was it all this time? The Hindu philosophers say, "It was passing through different bodies in the physical sense, or, really and metaphysically speaking, passing through different mental planes."

Are there any proofs apart from the teachings of the *Vedas* upon which the doctrine of reincarnation has been founded by the Hindu philosophers? There are; and, we hope to show later on, as valid grounds as for any other universally accepted doctrine. But, first, we will see what some of the greatest of modern European thinkers have thought about reincarnation.

I. H. Fichte, speaking about the immortality of the soul, says:—

"It is true there is one analogy in nature which might be brought forth in refutation of the continuance. It is the well-known argument that everything that has a beginning in time must also perish at some period of time; hence, that the claimed past existence of the soul necessarily implies its pre-existence. This is a fair conclusion, but, instead of being an objection to, it is rather an additional argument for, its continuance. Indeed one needs only to understand the full meaning of the metaphysico-physiological axiom, that in reality nothing can be created or

annihilated, to recognise that the soul must have existed prior to its becoming visible in a physical body."

Schopenhauer, in his book, "Die Welt als Wille and Vorstellung," speaking about palingenesis says :—

"What sleep is for the individual, death is for the 'will.' It would not endure to continue the same actions and sufferings throughout an eternity without true gain, if memory and individuality remained to it. It flings them off, and this is Lethe, and through this sleep of death it reappears fitted out with another intellect as a new being; a new day tempts to new shores. These constant new births, then, constitute the succession of the life-dreams of a will which in itself is indestructible, until, instructed and improved by so much and such various successive knowledge in a constantly new form it abolishes and abrogates itself.........It must not be neglected that even empirical grounds support a palingenesis of this kind. As a matter of fact, there does exist a connection between the birth of the newly appearing beings and the death of those that are worn out. It shows itself in the great fruitfulness of the human race, which appears as a consequence of devastating diseases. When in the fourteenth century the Black Death had for the most part depopulated the Old world, a quite abnormal fruitfulness appeared among the human race, and twinbirths were very frequent. The circumstance was also remarkable that none of the children born at this time obtained their full number of teeth; thus nature, exerting itself to the utmost, was niggardly in details." This is related by F. Schnurrer, in his 'Chronik der Seuchen,' 1825. Casper also, in his 'Ueber die Wahrscheinliche Lebensdauer des Menschen,' 1835, confirms the principle that the number of births in a given population has the most decided influ-

ence upon the length of life and mortality in it, as this always keeps pace with mortality; so that always and everywhere the deaths and the births increase and decrease in like proportion, which he places beyond doubt by an accumulation of evidence collected from many lands and their various provinces. And yet it is impossible that there can be a physical, causal connection between my early death and the fruitfulness of a marriage with which I have nothing to do, or conversely. Thus here the metaphysical appears undeniable, and in a stupendous manner, as the immediate ground of explanation of the physical. Every new-born being comes fresh and blithe into the new existence, and enjoys it as a free gift; but there is and can be nothing freely given. Its fresh existence is paid for by the old age and death of a worn-out existence which has perished, but which continued the indestructible seed out of which the new existence has arisen; they are one being.

The great English philosopher Hume, nihilistic though he was, says in his sceptical essay on immortality: "The metempsychosis is therefore, the only system of this kind that philosophy can listen to." The philosopher Lessing, with a deep poetical insight, asks: "Is this hypothesis so laughable merely because it is the oldest? Because the human understanding, before the sophistries of the schools had dissipated and debilitated it, lighted upon it at once? . . . Why should I not come back as I am capable of acquiring fresh knowledge, fresh experience? Do I bring away so much from once that there is nothing to repay the trouble of coming back."

The arguments for and against the doctrine of a pre-existing soul reincarnating through many lives have been many, and some of the greatest thinkers of all ages have taken the gauntlet up to defend it; and so far as we can

see, if there is an individual soul, that it existed before seems inevitable. If the soul is not an individual, but a combination of "skandhas," as the "Madhyamikas" among the Buddhists insist, still they find pre-existence absolutely necessary to explain their position.

The argument showing the impossibility of an infinite existence beginning in time is unanswerable, though attempts have been made to ward it off by appealing to the Omnipotence of God to do anything, however, contrary to reason it may be. We are sorry to find this most fallacious argument proceeding from some of the most thoughtful.

In the first place, God being the universal and common cause of all phenomena, the question was to find the natural cause of certain phenomena in the human soul, and the *Deus ex machina* theory is, therefore, quite irrelevant. It amounts to nothing less than a confession of ignorance. We can put that answer to every question asked in every branch of human knowledge, and stop all inquiry, and, therefore, knowledge, altogether.

Secondly, this constant appeal to the Omnipotence of God is only a word-puzzle. The cause, as cause, is and can only be known to us as sufficient for the effect, and nothing more. As such we have no more idea of an infinite effect than of an omnipotent cause. Moreover, all our ideas of God are only limited; even the idea of cause limits our idea of God. Thirdly, even taking the position for granted, we are not bound to allow any such absurd theories as "something coming out of nothing," or "infinity beginning in time," so long as we can give a better explanation.

A so-called great argument is made against the idea of pre-existence, by asserting that the majority of mankind are not conscious of it. To prove the validity of this argument the party who offers it must prove that the whole of

the soul of man is bound up in the faculty of memory. If memory be the test of existence, then all that part of our lives which is not now in it must be non-existent, and every person, who in a state of coma, or otherwise, loses his memory, must be non-existent also.

The premises which make the inference of a previous existence, and that, too, on the plane of conscious action, as adduced by the Hindu philosophers, are chiefly these:

First, how else to explain this world of inequalities? Here is one child born in the providence of a just and merciful God, with every circumstance conducing to his becoming a good and useful member of the human race, and perhaps at the same instant and in the same city another child is born, under circumstances every one of which is against his becoming good. We see even children born to suffer, perhaps all their lives, and that owing to no fault of theirs. Why should it be so? What is the cause? Of whose ignorance is it the result? If not the child's, why should it suffer, even for its parents' action?

It is much better to confess ignorance than try to evade the question by the allurements of future enjoyments in proportion to the evil here, or by posing "mysteries." Not only undeserved suffering here is immoral—for any agent to force it upon us, not to say unjust—but even the future-making-up theory has no legs to stand upon.

How many of the miserably born struggle toward a higher life, and how many more succumb to the circumstances they are placed under? Should those who are made worse and more wicked by being forced to be born under evil circumstances be rewarded for the wickedness of their lives in the future? In that case, the more wicked the man, the better will be his desserts hereafter.

There is no other way to vindicate the glory and the

liberty of the human soul and to reconcile the inequalities and the horrors of this world, than by placing the whole burden upon the legitimate cause—our own independent actions, or "Karma." Not only so, but every theory of the creation of the soul from nothing inevitably leads to fatalism and pre-ordination, and instead of a merciful father places before us a hideous, cruel, and ever-angry God to worship. And so far as the power of religion for good or evil is concerned, this theory of a created soul, leading to its corollaries of fatalism and predestination, is responsible for the horrible idea prevailing among Christians and Mahomedans—that the heathens are the lawful victims of their swords—and all the horrors that have followed and are following it still.

But an argument which the philosophers of the Nyaya school have always advanced in favour of reincarnation, and which to us seems conclusive, is this: Our experiences cannot be annihilated. Our actions (Karma) though apparently disappearing, remain still unperceived (*Adrishtam*), and reappear again in their effect as tendencies (*Pravrittis*). Even little babies come with certain tendencies—fear of death, for example.

Now, if a tendency is the result of repeated actions, the tendencies with which we are born must be explained on that ground too. Evidently we could not have got them in this life; therefore we must have to seek for their genesis in the past. Now it is also evident that some of our tendencies are the effects of the self-conscious efforts peculiar to man; and if it is true that we are born with such tendencies, it rigorously follows that their causes were conscious efforts in the past—that is, we must have been on the same mental plane which we call the human plane before this present life.

So far as explaining the tendencies of the present life by past conscious efforts go, the reincarnationists of India and the latest school of evolutionists are one; the only difference is that the Hindus, as spiritualists, explain it by the conscious efforts of individual souls, and the materialistic school of evolutionists only by an hereditary physical transmission. The schools which hold to the theory of creation out of nothing are entirely out of court.

The issue has to be fought out between the reincarnationists—who hold that all experiences are stored up as tendencies in the subject of those experiences, the individual soul, and are transmitted by reincarnation of that unbroken individuality—and the materialists, who hold that the brain is the subject of all actions and the transmission through cells.

It is thus that the doctrine of reincarnation assumes an infinite importance before our mind, for the fight between reincarnation and mere cellular transmission is, in reality, the fight between spiritualism and materialism. If cellular transmission is the all-sufficient explanation, materialism is inevitable, and there is no necessity for the theory of a soul. If it is not a sufficient explanation, the theory of an individual soul bringing into this life the experiences of the past is as absolutely true. There is no escape from the alternative, reincarnation or materialism. Which shall we accept?—*Metaphysical Magazine*, March 1895.

——: o :——

IMMORTALITY.

WHAT question has been asked a greater number of times; what idea has sent men more to search the universe for an answer, what question is nearer and dearer to the human heart, what question is more inseparably connected with our existence, than this one, the immortality of the human soul? It has been the theme of poets, and of sages, of priests and of prophets; kings on the throne have discussed it, beggars in the street have dreamt of it. The best of human kind have approached it, and the worst of human kind have always hoped for it. The interest in the theme has not died yet, nor will it die, so long as human nature exists. Various answers have been presented to the world by various minds. Thousands, again, in every period of history have given up the discussion, and yet the question remains fresh as ever. Many times in the turmoils and struggles of our lives we seem to forget the question, all of a sudden, some one dies; one, perhaps, whom we loved, one near and dear to our heart, is snatched away from us. The struggle, the din and turmoil of the world around us, cease for a moment, become silent, and the soul asks the old question, "What after this?" What becomes of the soul? All human knowledge proceeds out of experience; we cannot know anything except by experience. All our reasoning is based upon generalised experience, all our knowledge is but a sort of harmonised experience. Looking around us, what do we find? A continuous change. The plant comes out of the seed, and

the seed becomes the plant again; the plant grows into the tree, completes the circle, and comes back to the seed. The animal comes, lives a certain time, dies, and completes the circle. So does man. The mountains slowly but surely crumble away, the rivers slowly but surely dry up, rains come out of the sea, and go back to the sea. Everywhere it is circles being completed, birth, growth, development and decay following each other with mathematical precision. This is our every-day experience. Inside of it all, behind all this vast mass of what we call life, of millions of forms and shapes, millions upon millions of varieties, beginning from the lower atom to the highest spiritualised man, we find existing a certain unity. Every day we find that the wall that was thought to be dividing one substance and another is being broken down, and all matter is coming to be recognised by modern science as one substance, manifesting in different ways and in various forms the one life that runs like a continuous chain throughout, of which all these various forms represent the links, link after link, extending almost infinitely, but of the same one chain. This is what is called evolution. It is an old, old idea, as old as human society, only it is getting fresher and fresher as human knowledge is going on. There is one thing more, which the ancients perceived, and that is involution; but in modern times, this is not yet so clearly perceived. The seed is becoming the plant; a grain of sand never becomes a plant. It is the father that becomes the child. A lump of clay never becomes the child. Out of what this evolution comes is the question. What was the seed? It was the same as the tree. All the possibilities of a future tree are in that seed; all the possibilities of a future man are in the little baby; all the possibilities of any future life are in the germ. What is this? The ancient

8

philosophers of India called it involution. We find, then, that every evolution presupposes an involution. Nothing can be evolved which is not already in. Here again modern science comes to our help. You know by mathematical reasoning that the sum-total of the energy that is displayed in the universe is the same throughout. You cannot take away one atom of matter or one foot-pound of force. You cannot add to the universe one atom of matter or one foot-pound of force. As such, evolution did not come out of zero; then, where does it come from? It came in involution before. The child is the man *in*volved, and the man is the child *e*volved. The seed is the tree involved, and the tree is the seed evolved. All the possibilities of all life are in the germ. The question becomes a little clearer. Add to it the first idea of continuation of life. From the lowest protoplasm to the most perfect human being, there is really one life. Just as in one life we have so many various phases of expression, the baby, the child, the young man, the old man—extend that farther, and trace the baby a few steps back, then back, and back, until you come to the protoplasm. Thus, from that protoplasm up to the most perfect man we get one continuous line, one chain. This is evolution, but we have seen that each evolution presupposes an involution. The whole of this life which slowly manifests itself, evolves itself from the protoplasm to the perfected human being, the incarnation of God on earth, the whole of this series is but one life, and the whole of this manifestation must have been involved in that very protoplasm. This whole life, this very God on earth was involved there, and only slowly. The highest expression must have been there in the germ state, in minute form; therefore, this one force, this whole chain, is the involution of what? Of that cosmic

life which is everywhere? This one mass of intelligence which is from the protaplasm up to the most perfected man, slowly and slowly uncoils itself. What was it? It was a part of the cosmic universal intelligence involved in that little protoplasm itself, and it was all there. Not that it grows. Take off all ideas of growth from your mind. With the idea of growth is associated something coming from outside, something extraneous, and that will break the mathematical demonstration that the cosmic energy is the same throughout. It can never grow. It was there, only it manifests itself. What is destruction? Here is a glass. I throw it on the ground, and it breaks to pieces. What becomes of it? It becomes fine. What is destruction? The gross becoming fine. The elements, the particles, the components, the materials, the causes are combined, and become this effect called the glass. They go back to their causes, and this is what is meant by destruction—going back to the cause. What is the effect? The causes manifested. There is no essential difference between the effect and the cause. Take this glass, again. Here was the meterial, and that material *plus* the will of the manufacturer, these two made the glass, and these two were its causes, and were present in it. In what form? Adhesion. If the force were not here, each particle would fall off. What has become of the effect then? It is the same as the cause, only taking a different form, a different composition. When the cause is changed and limited and condensed for a time, or space, then the very cause is called effect. We must remember this. Applying it to our idea of life, the whole of the manifestation of this one series, from the protoplasm up to the most perfect man must be the very same thing as cosmic life. First it got involved and became finer, and out of that fine something which was

the cause, it has gone on evolving, is manifesting itself, becoming grosser. But the question of immortality is not settled here still. What have we got? We get this, that everything in this universe is indestructible. There is nothing new; there will be nothing new. The same series of manifestations are presenting themselves alternately, like a wheel, coming up and down. All motion in this universe is in the form of waves, successively rising and falling. Systems after systems are coming out of the finer forms, evolving themselves, taking the grosser forms, again melting down, as it were, and going back to the fine forms. Again they rise out of that, rising for a certain period and slowly going back to the cause. So with all life. Each manifestation of life is coming up, and then going back again. What goes down? The form. The form breaks to pieces, but the same form comes up. In one sense the body even is immortal. In one sense bodies and forms even are eternal. How? Suppose we take a number of dice, and throw them. Suppose the dice fall in this ratio—6—5—3—4. We take the dice up and throw them again, and again; and again; there must come a time when the same number will fall again; the same combination must come. Again let them fall, and the same combination comes, but after a long while. Now each particle, each atom, that is in this universe I take for such a die, and these are being thrown out, and combined, again and again. This is one combination; all these forms are before you. Here is the form of a glass, a table, a pitcher of water, all these things. This is one combination; the next moment it will all break. But there must come a time when exactly the same combination comes again, when you will be here, and this form will be here, this subject will be talked, and this pitcher will be here. An infinite

number of times this has been, and an infinite number of times will be repeated. Thus far with the physical forms. What do we find ? That even the combination of physical forms is eternally repeated.

A most interesting question that comes along with this particle repetition, is the explanation of all such questions as this. Some of you, perhaps, have seen a man who can read the past life of another man, and foretell the life of the future. How is it possible for any one to see what the future will be, until there is a regulated future ? Effects of the past will recur in the future, and we see that is so. But that does not affect the soul. Think of one of these big Ferris wheels in Chicago. These wheels are going on, and the little rooms in the wheel are regularly coming one after the other, one set of persons gets into these, and after they have gone round the circle they get out, and a fresh batch of people get in. Each one of these batches is like one of these manifestations, from the lowest animal to the highest man. This is the circular chain of the Ferris wheel of Nature ; gigantic, infinite, and each one of the bodies or forms is one of these little houses or boxes, and fresh batches of souls are riding in them, and going up higher and higher until they become perfect, and come out of the wheel. But the wheel goes on, ready for others. And so long as the body is in the wheel, it can be absolutely and mathematically foretold where *it* will go, but not of the *soul*. Therefore it is possible to read the past and the future of nature absolutely and mathematically. We come to this, that there is recurrence of the same material phonomena at certain periods, that the same combinations have been going on through eternity. But that is not immortality of the soul. No force can die, no matter can be annihilated. What becomes of it ? It goes on changing,

forward and backward, until it comes back to the source from which it came. There is no motion in a straight line. Everything is in a circle, because a straight line, infinitely produced, becomes a circle. If that is the case, there cannot be eternal degeneration for any soul. It cannot be. Everything must complete the circle, and come back to its source. What are you and I and all these souls? As we have seen in our discussion of evolution and involution, you and I must be part of the cosmic consciousness, cosmic life, cosmic mind, which get involved, and we must complete the circle and go back to this cosmic intelligence which is God. That very cosmic intelligence is what the people call Lord, or God, or Christ, or Buddha, or Brahma, whom the materialists perceive as a force, whom the agnostics perceive as that infinite, inexpressible beyond. This is that infinite cosmic life, cosmic intelligence, cosmic power, and we are all parts of that. This is the second idea, yet this is not sufficient; there will be still more doubts. It is very good to say that there is no destruction for any force. But all the forces that we see are combinations, and all the forms that we see are combinations. This form is a composition of several component parts, and so every force that we see is similarly composite. If you take the scientific idea of force, and call it the sum-total, the resultant of several forces, what becomes of your individuality? Everything that is compound must sooner or later get back to its component parts. Whatever in this universe is the result of the combination of matter or force, whatever is the result of combination, must sooner or later get back to its components. Whatever is the result of certain causes must die, be destroyed. It gets dispersed, broken up, resolved back into its components. Soul is not a force; neither is it thought. It is the manufacturer of

of thought, but not thought; it is the manufacturer of the body, but not the body. Why so? We see that the body cannot be the soul. Why? Because it is not intelligent. A dead man is not intelligent, or a piece of flesh in a butcher's shop. What do we mean by intelligence? That reactive power. We want to go a little more deeply into it. Here is a pitcher: I see it. What happens? Rays of light from the pitcher enter my eyes; they make a picture in my retina, and that impression comes to the brain. Yet there is no vision. What the physiologists call the sensory nerves carry this impression inward. But up to this there is no reaction. The nerve centre in the brain must carry the impression to the mind, and the mind reacts, and as soon as this comes, the pitcher flashes before it. To make it more clear, and give it rather a commonplace example; suppose you are listening to me intently, and a mosquito is sitting on the tip of your nose, and giving you that pleasant sensation which mosquitoes can give; but you are so intent on hearing me that you do not feel the mosquito at all. What has happened? The mosquito has bitten a certain part of your skin, and certain nerves are there. They have carried a certain sensation into the brain, and the impression is there, but the mind, being otherwise occupied, does not react, so you are not aware of the presence of the mosquito. When a new impression comes in, if the mind does not react, we will not be conscious of it, but when comes the reaction, along with that will come the consciousness, and we feel, we see, or we hear, and so forth. With this reaction comes illumination, as the Sankhya philosophers call it. We see that the body cannot illuminate, because we see that in one case I did not feel, my attention was not there, I did not feel the sensation at all. Cases have been known where

under certain conditions, a man who had never learned a particular language, was found able to speak that language. Subsequent inquiries proved that the man had, when a child, lived among people who spoke that language and the impressions were left on his brain. These impressions remained stored up there, until through some cause the mind reacted, and illumination came, and then the man was able to speak the language. This shows that the mind alone is not sufficient, that the mind itself is an instrument in the hands of some one. In the case of that boy the mind was full of that language, yet he did not know it, but later there came a time when he did. It shows that there is some one besides the mind, and when the boy was a baby that some one did not use the power, but when he grew up, took advantage of it, and used it. First, here is the body, second the mind, or instrument of thought, and third behind this mind is the Self of man. The Sanskrit word is *Atman*. As modern philosophers have identified thought with molecular changes in the brain, they do not know how to explain such a case, and they generally deny it. The mind is intimately connected with the brain, and dies every time the body changes. Self is the illuminator, and the mind is the instrument in its hands, and through that instrument it gets hold of the external instrument, and thus comes perception. The external instrument gets hold of the impression, and carries it to the organs, for you must remember always that the eyes and ears are only receivers, it is the internal organs, the brain centres which act. In Sanskrit these centres are called *indriyas*, and they carry sensations to the mind, and the mind presents them further back to other states of the mind, which in Sanskrit is called *chitta*, and there they are organised into will, and all these things, which place it before the King of Kings inside, the Ruler

on His throne, the Self of man. He then sees and gives His orders. Then the mind immediately acts on the organs, and the organs on the external body. The real Perceiver, the real Ruler, the Governor, the Creator, the Manipulator of all this is the Self of man. We have seen then that this Self of man is not the body, and it is not thought. Neither body nor thought. It cannot be a compound. Why not? Because everything that is a compound we must either see or imagine. That which we cannot imagine or perceive, that which we cannot bind together, that is not force or matter, cause or effect, or causation, cannot be a compound. The power of compound is so far as our mental universe, our thought universe, takes us. Beyond this it does not hold good. It is as far as law will take it, and if it is anything beyond law, it cannot be a compound at all. I think that is easy enough to you, yet I will be more explicit. You see what makes a compound. This glass is a compound, in which the causes have combined and become the effect. So these compound things can be only within the circle of the law of causation, so far as the rules of cause and effect go, so far can we have compounds and combinations. Beyond that, it is impossible to talk of combinations, because no law holds good therein. Beyond this they do not hold good, and law holds good only in that universe which we see, feel, hear, imagine, dream, and beyond that we cannot place any law, the idea of law does not hold good beyond that. We have seen, too, that that is our universe which we sense, or imagine, and we sense what is in our direct perception, and we imagine what is in our mind, therefore what is beyond the body is beyond the senses, and what is beyond the mind is beyond the imagination, and, therefore, is beyond our universe. Therefore, beyond the law of causa-

tion, is the free Ruler, the Self. Therefore, the Self rules everything that is within the law. This Self of man goes beyond the law, and, therefore, must be free, cannot be any composition, or the result of any composition, or the effect of any cause. It will never die, because death is going back to the component parts, and that which was never a compound can never die. It will be sheer nonsense to say it dies. It does not end here.

We are now treading on finer and finer ground. Some of you perhaps will be frightened; we are treading on very delicate ground. We have seen that this Self, being beyond the little universe of matter and force and thought, is a simple, and as a simple it cannot die, neither can it live. That which does not die, cannot live also. So, what is death? The obverse, and life the reverse of the same coin. Life is another name for death, and death for life. One particular mode of manifestation is what we call life; another particular mode of manifestation of the same thing is what we call death. When the wave rises on the top it is life; falls into the hollow and is death. If anything is beyond death, we naturally see it must also be beyond *life*. I must remind you of the first conclusion, that this soul of man is one part of the cosmic energy that exists, one part of God. We now come to find that it is beyond life and death. You were never born, and you will never die. What is the birth and death that we see? This belongs to the body, because soul is omnipresent. How is that? We are so many people sitting here, and you say the soul is omnipresent. What is there to limit anything that is beyond law, beyond causation? This glass is limited; it is not omnipresent, because the surrounding matter forces it down to that form, does not allow it to expand. It is conditioned by everything around it; there

fore, it is limited. But that which is beyond law, where there is nobody to act upon it, how can that be limited? It must be omnipresent. You are everywhere in the universe. How is it then that I am born and I am going to die, and all that? That is the talk of ignorance, hallucinations of the brain. You were neither born, nor will die. You have had neither birth, nor will have rebirth, nor life nor incarnation, nor anything. What do you mean by coming and going? All shallow nonsense. You are everywhere. Then what is this coming and going? It is the hallucination produced by the change of this fine body, what you call the mind. That is going on. Just a little speck of cloud passing before the sky. As it moves on and on, it may create the delusion that the sky moves. Sometimes you see a cloud moving before the moon, and you think the moon is moving. But it is the cloud. When you are in a train you see that the land is flying, or when you are in a boat, you think the water moves. In reality you are neither going nor coming, nor born, or going to be born, you are infinite, ever-present, beyond all causation, ever free, never born, and never die. Such a question is out of place; such a question is arrant nonsense to ask. Because there was no birth; how could there be any mortality. You are the omnipresent beings of the universe.

One step more we will have to go to get a logical conclusion. There is no half-way house. You are metaphysicians, and there is no crying quarter. If then we are beyond all law, we must be omniscient, ever blessed, all knowledge must be in us, and all power and all blessedness. Certainly. You are the omniscient, omnipresent being of the universe. But of such beings can there be many? Can there be a hundred thousand millions of omnipresent beings? Certainly there cannot be. Then what becomes of all of us? You are

only one; there is only one such Self, and that one Self is you. Standing behind this little nature is what we call the soul. There is one only Being, one only existence, the ever-blessed, the omnipresent, the omniscient, the birthless, the deathless. "Through His control the sky expands, through His control the air breathes, through His control the sun shines, all lives are." And He is the background of Nature, He is the Reality that is in Nature. He is the background of your soul. Not only so, but you are He. You are one with Him. Whenever there are two, there is fear, there is danger, there is conflict, there is strife. When it is all One, whom to hate, with whom to struggle, when it is all He, with whom to fight? This explains the nature of life. This explains the nature of being. This is perfection, and this is God. As long as you see the many, you are under delusion. "In this world of many, he who sees that One in this ever changing world, he who sees Him who never changes as the Soul of his own soul, his existence, his own Self, he is free, he is blessed, he has reached the goal." Therefore know that thou art He; thou art the God of this universe, *tat tvam asi*, and all these various ideas that "I am a man," or a woman, or sick, or healthy, or strong, or weak, or I hate, or I love, or have a little power, or more power, are but hallucinations. Away with them! What makes you weak? What makes you fear? You are the one being in the universe. What frightens you? Stand then and be free. Know that every thought and word that weakens in this world is the only evil that exists. Whatever makes men weak, makes men fear, is the only evil that should be shunned. What can frighten you? If the suns come down, the moons crumble into dust, systems after systems are hurled into annihilation, what is that to you? Stand as a rock; you are indes-

tructible. You are the Self, the God of the universe. "I am Existence Absolute,—Bliss Absolute,—Knowledge Absolute, I am He." Say that, and as the lion breaks the little cage of bulrushes and comes out, so break this chain and be free for ever. What frightens you, what holds you down? It is only ignorance and delusion! Nothing else can bind you. You are the pure One, the ever blessed.

Silly fools tell you, you are sinners, and sit down in a corner and weep. Foolishness, wickedness, downright rascality to say you are sinners! You are all God. See you not God and call it man? Therefore if you dare, stand on that,—mould your whole life on that. If a man cuts your throat do not say no, for you are cutting your own throat. When you help a poor man, do not feel the least pride. That is worship for you, and not the cause of pride. Is not the whole universe you? Where is there any one that is not you? You are the soul of this universe. You are the sun, moon, and stars, it is you that is shining in the land. The whole universe is you. Whom are you going to hate, or to fight? Know then that thou art He, and model your whole life according to that, and he who knows this and models his life according to it, will no more grovel in darkness.

——: o :——

IS THE SOUL IMMORTAL?*

None has power to destroy the unchangeable.—*Gita.*

IN the great Sanskrit epic, the Mahabharata, the story is told how the hero Yudhisthira, when asked by Dharma to tell what was the most wonderful thing in the world, replied that it was the persistent belief of mankind in their own deathlessness in spite of their witnessing death everywhere around them almost every moment of their lives.

And, in fact, this is the most stupendous wonder in human life. In spite of all arguments to the contrary urged in different times by different schools, in spite of the inability of reason to penetrate the veil of mystery which will ever hang between the sensuous and the supersensuous worlds, man is thoroughly persuaded that he cannot die.

We may study all our lives, and in the end fail to bring the problem of life and death to the plane of rational demonstration, affirmative or negative. We may talk or write, preach or teach for or against the permanency or sporadicity of human existence as much as we like; we may become violent partisans of this side or that; we may invent names by the hundreds, each more intricate than its predecessor, and lull ourselves in a momentary rest under the delusion of our having solved the problem once for all—

* The Swami's contribution to the discussion of this question carried on in the pages of the *New York Morning Advertiser.*

nay, we may cling with all our powers to any one of the curious religious superstitions or the far more disgusting scientific superstitions—in the end we find ourselves playing an eternal game in the bowling alley of reason and raising intellectual pin after pin, only to be knocked over again and again.

But behind all this mental strain and torture, not infrequently productive of more dangerous games than mere play, stands a fact unchallenged and unchallengeable—the inability of our mind to conceive our own annihilation.

Even to imagine my own annihilation I will have to stand by and look on as a witness.

Now, before trying to understand what this curious phenomenon means, we want to note that upon this one fact the whole world is standing. The permanence of the external world is inevitably joined to the permanence of the internal, and, however plausible any theory of the universe may seem which denies the permanence of the one and asserts that of the other, the very theorist will find that in his own mechanism not one conscious action is possible without the permanence of both the internal and the external words being one of the factors in the motive cause. Although it is perfectly true that when the human mind transcends its own limitations it finds the duality reduced to an indivisible unity, on this side of the unconditioned the whole objective world—that is to say, the world we know—is and can be alone known to us as existing for the subject, and, therefore, before we would be able to conceive the annihilation of the subject, we are bound to conceive the annihilation of the object.

So far it is plain enough. But now comes the difficulty. I cannot think of myself ordinarily as anything else but a body. My idea of my own permanence includes

my idea of myself as a body. But the body is obviously impermanent as is the whole of nature a constantly vanishing quantity.

Where, then, is this permanence?

There is one more wonderful phenomenon connected with our lives, without which "who will be able to live, who will be able to enjoy life a moment?"—the idea of freedom.

This is the idea that guides every footstep of ours, makes our movements possible, determines our relations to each other—nay, is the very warp and woof in the fabric of human life. Intellectual knowledge tries to drive it inch by inch from its territory, post after post is snatched away from its domains, and each step is made fast and iron-bound with the railroadings of cause and effect. But it laughs at all our attempts, and, lo! it keeps from above all this massive pile of law and causation with which we tried to smother it to death. How can it be otherwise? The limited always requires a higher generalization of the unlimited to explain itself. The bound can only be explained by the free, the caused by the uncaused.

But again the same difficulty is also here. What is free? The body, or even the mind? It is apparent to all, that they are as much bound by law as anything else in the universe.

Now the problem resolves itself into this dilemma. Either the whole universe is a mass of never-ceasing change and nothing more, irrevocably bound by the law of causations, not one particle having a unity of itself, yet is curiously producing an ineradicable delusion of permanence and freedom, or there is in us and in the universe something which is permanent and free, and that the basal constitutional belief of the human mind is not a delusion. It is the duty of science to explain facts by bringing them

to a higher generalization. Any explanation, therefore, that wants to destroy, first, a part of the facts given to be explained, in order to fit itself to the remainder, is not science, whatever else it may be.

Now, any explanation that wants to overlook the fact of this persistent and all-necessary idea of freedom commits the above-mentioned mistake of denying a portion of the fact in order to explain the rest, and is, therefore, wrong.

The only other alternative possible, then, is to acknowledge, in harmony with our nature, that there is something in us which is free and permanent.

But it is not the body; neither is it the mind. The body is dying every minute. The mind is constantly changing. The body is a combination. So is the mind, and, as such, can never reach to a state beyond all change.

But beyond both this momentary sheathing of gross matter, beyond even the finer covering of the mind, is the A'tman, the true self of man, the permanent, the ever free.

It is his freedom that is percolating layers of thought and matter, and, in spite of the colorings of name and form, is ever asserting its unshackled existence. It is his deathlessness, his bliss, his peace, this divinity in humanity that shines out and makes itself felt in spite of thickest layers of ignorance. He is the real man, the fearless one, the deathless one, the free.

Now, freedom is only possible when no external power can exert any influence, produce any change. Freedom is only possible to the being who is beyond all conditions, all laws, all bondages of cause and effect. In other words, the unchangeable alone can be free and, therefore, immortal.

This being, this A'tman, this real self of man, the free, the unchangeable, is beyond all conditions, and, as such, it has neither birth nor death.

Without birth or death, eternal, ever-existing is this soul of man.

——o:——

THE FREEDOM OF THE SOUL.

THE Katha Upanishad, which we have been studying, was written much later than that to which we now turn—the Chhandogya. The language is more modern, and the thought more organised. In the older Upanishads the language is very archaic, like that of the hymn portions of the Veda, and one has to wade sometimes through quite a mass of unnecessary things to get at the essential doctrines. The ritualistic literature about which I told you, forming the second division of the Vedas, has left a good deal of its mark upon this old Upanishad, so that more than half of it is still ritualistic. But then there is one great gain in studying the very old Upanishads, you trace, as it were, the historical springing up of spiritual ideas. In the more recent Upanishads the spiritual ideas have been collected and brought into one place, just as in the Bhagavad Gita, for instance, which we may perhaps look upon as the last of the Upanishads, you do not find any inkling of these ritualistic ideas. Every verse of the Gita has been collected from some portion of the Upanishads, and made into a sort of bouquet. But therein you cannot understand the rise of the idea, you cannot trace it to its source, and that is, as has been pointed out by many, one of the great benefits of studying the Vedas, for the great idea of holiness that has been attached to these books has preserved them, more than any other book in the world, from mutilation. There, thoughts at their highest and at their lowest level have all been preserved, essential and non-essential, the most ennobling and simple matters of

detail, nobody has dared to touch them. The commentators came, of course, and tried to smooth them out, and to bring out wonderful new ideas from very old things; they tried to find spiritual ideas in even the most ordinary statements, but the texts remained, and, as such, they are the most wonderful historical study. We all know that in every religion in later times, as thoughts began to grow and develop there came this spiritual progress. One word is changed here and one put in there; another is thrown out apart from the commentators. This, probably, has not been done *with the Vedic literature* at all, or if ever done, it is almost imperceptible. So we have this great advantage, we are able to study thoughts in their original significance, to note how they are developing, how from materialistic ideas, finer and finer spiritual ideas are growing, until they attain their greatest height in the Vedanta. Some of the old manners and customs are also there, but not very much in the Upanishads. The language is a peculiar terse mnemonic.

The writers of these books simply jotted down these lines as helps to remember certain facts which they supposed were already well-known. In a narrative, perhaps, as they are telling a story they take it for granted that it is well-known to everyone they are addressing, and thus a great difficulty arises, we scarcely know the real meaning of any one of these stories, because the traditions have nearly died out, and the little that is left has been very much exaggerated. So many new interpretations have been put on them that when you find them in the Puranas they have become lyrical poems already. Now, just as in the West, we find one fact in the political development of Western races: they cannot bear absolute rule, they are always trying to throw off any sort of bondage, any one

man ruling over them, and they are gradually advancing to higher and higher democratic ideas, higher and higher ideas of physical liberty; so in metaphysics exactly the same phenomenon happens, only in spiritual life. Multiplicity of gods gave place to one God of the Universe, and in the Upanishads there is a rebellion against that one God. Not only was the idea of so many governors of the Universe ruling their destinies unbearable, but it was also intolerable to them that there should be one person ruling this Universe. This is the first thing that strikes us. The idea grows and grows, until it attains its climax. In almost all of the Upanishads we find the climax coming at the last, and that is the dethroning of this God of the Universe. The personality of God vanishes, the impersonality comes. God is no more a person, no more a human being, however magnified and exaggerated, ruling this Universe, but God has become an embodied principle in us, in every being, immanent in the whole Universe. And of course it would be illogical to go from the personal God to the impersonal, and at the same time to leave man as a person. So the personal man has to be broken down, man is also a principle. The person is without, the principle is behind, the Truth. Thus from both sides simultaneously we find the breaking down of personalities and the approach towards principles, the personal God approaching the impersonal, the personal man approaching the impersonal man, and then comes the succeeding stages of delineating the difference between the two advancing lines of Impersonal God and Impersonal Man. And the Upanishads embody these succeeding stages, by which these two lines at last become one, and the last word of each Upanishad is, "Thou art That." There is but one eternally blissful, and that one principle is manifesting itself as all this variety.

Then came the philosophers. The work of the Upanishads seems to have ended at that point; the next was taken up by the philosophers. The framework was given them by the Upanishads, and they had to work out the details.

So, many questions would naturally arise. Taking for granted that there is but one impersonal principle which is manifesting itself in all these manifold forms, how is it that the one becomes many? It is the same old question which, in its crude form, comes into the human heart in the shape of an explanation of the existence of evil and so forth. Why does evil exist in the world, and so on? But the same question has become refined, abstracted. No more is it asked from the platform of the senses why we are unhappy, but from the platform of philosophy. How is it that this one principle becomes manifold? And the answer, as we have seen, the best answer that India produced was the theory of Maya, that it really has not become manifold, that it really did not lose a bit of its real nature. This manifold is only apparent. Man is only apparently a person, and, in reality, he is the Impersonal Being. God is a person only apparently, but really he is the Impersonal Being of the Universe.

Even in this answer there have been succeeding stages —philosophies have varied. All Indian philosophers did not admit this theory of Maya. Possibly most of them did not. There are the Dualists, with a very crude sort of Dualism, who would not allow the question to be asked, stifled it at its very coming into existence. They said you have no right to ask such a question, you have no right to ask for an explanation; it is simply the will of God, and we have to submit quietly. There is no liberty for the human soul. It is all predestined—what we shall do, and have,

and suffer, and enjoy, and it is our duty quietly to suffer, and if we do not, we shall be punished all the more. How do we know that? Because the Vedas say so. And so they have their texts, their meanings, and they want to enforce them.

There are others who, though not admitting the Maya theory, stand in the midway, and try to explain all this by succeeding manifestations, succeeding development and degradation of the nature of man. All souls are metaphorically expanded and contracted in turn. The whole of this creation forms, as it were, the body of God. God is the soul of all souls and of the whole of Nature. Creation means the expansion of this nature of God, and after it is expanded for a certain time it again begins to contract. In the case of individual souls the contraction comes from evil-doing. When a man does anything evil, his soul begins to contract in its power and so on it goes, until it does good works, and then it expands again. The one idea seems to be common in all these various Indian systems, and to my mind in every system in the world, whether they know it or not, and that is what I should call the Divinity of Man. There is no one system in the world, no proper religion, which does not hold somewhere or other, either expressed in the language of mythology or in the language of allegory, or in the polished, clear language of philosophy, the one idea that the human soul, whatever it be, or whatever its relation to God may be is essentially pure and perfect. That already is its nature, that blessedness and power are its nature, not weakness and not misery. Somehow or other this misery has come. The crude systems may call in a personal evil, a devil, or an Ahriman to explain how this misery came. Other systems may try to make a God and a devil in one, making some people miserable and some

happy, without any explanation whatever. Others again, more thoughtful, bring in the theory of Maya and so forth. But one fact stands out clearly, and it is that with which we have to deal. After all, these philosophical ideas and systems are but the gymnastics of the mind, intellectual exercises. The one great idea that to me seems to be clear, and comes out through masses of superstition in every country and every religion, is that one luminous idea that man is divine, that that divinity is our nature.

Whatever else comes is a mere super-imposition, as the Vedanta calls it. Something has been super-imposed, but that Divine Nature never dies. In the most degraded, as well as the most saintly, it is present there. It has to be called out, and it will work itself out. We have to ask and it will manifest itself. The old people fancied that fire lives in the flint, and friction of the steel is necessary to call that fire out. Fire lives in two dry pieces of stick, friction was only necessary to cause it to manifest itself. So this fire, the natural freedom and purity, is the nature of every soul, not its qualities, because qualities can be acquired and, therefore, lost. The soul is one with freedom, and the soul is one with existence, and the soul is one with knowledge; this Sat-Chit-Ananda—Existence, Knowledge and Bliss Absolute—is the nature, the birthright of the soul, and all the manifestations that we see are the expressions of this nature of the soul, dimly or brightly manifesting itself. Even death itself is but the manifestation of that Real Existence. Birth and death, life and decay, degradation and degeneration, or regeneration, are all but the manifestations of that Oneness. So, knowledge, however it manifests itself, either as ignorance or as learning, is but the manifestation of that same Chit, that

essence of knowledge; the difference is only in degree, and not in kind. The difference in knowledge between the lowest worm that crawls under our feet or the highest genius that the heavens may produce, is only one of degree, and not of kind. So the Vedantin thinker says boldly that the bliss of the enjoyments in this life that we have, even the most degraded joy, is but the manifestation of that one Divine Bliss, the essence of the soul.

This one idea seems to be the most prominent, and, as I have said, to me it appears that every religion holds this same doctrine, I have yet to know the religion which has not that as its basis. It is the one universal idea working through all religions. Take the Bible, for instance. You find there the allegorical statement, how Adam came first and was pure, and that purity was obliterated by his evil deeds afterwards. It is clear from this allegory that they thought that the nature of the primitive man, or however they may have put it, the real man, was already perfection. The impurities that we see, the weakness that we feel, are but super-impositions, and the subsequent history of that very religion shows that they also believe in the possibility, nay, the surety of regaining that old state. This is the whole history of the Bible, Old and New Testament together. So with the Mahommedans, they also believed in Adam and the purity of Adam, and since Mahommed came the way opened to regain that lost state. So with the Buddhists, they also believed in the state called Nirvana, which is beyond this relative world of ours. It is exactly the same which the Vedantins call the Brahman, and the whole system of the Buddhists is advice to regain that lost state of Nirvana. So in every system, we find that one doctrine always present, that you cannot get anything which was not yours already. You are

indebted to nobody in this Universe. You will claim your own birthright, or as it has been most poetically put by the great Vedantin philosopher, by making it the title of one of his books—"The attaining to our Empire." That empire is ours; we have lost it and we have to regain it. Mayavadin, however, says that this losing of the empire was an hallucination; you never lost it. This is the only difference.

Although all the systems agree so far, that we had the empire, and that we have lost it, they give us varied advice how to regain it. One says that you must perform certain ceremonies, pay certain sums of money to certain idols, eat certain sorts of food, live in a peculiar fashion to regain that empire. Another says that if you weep and prostrate yourselves and ask pardon of some Being beyond Nature, you will regain that empire. Another says, if you love such a Being with all your heart, you will regain that empire. All this varied advice is in the Upanishads. As I go on you will find it so. But the last and the greatest counsel is, that you need not weep at all. You need not go through all these ceremonies, and need not take any notice of how to regain your empire, because you never lost it. Why should you go to seek for what you never lost. You are pure already, you are free already. If you think you are bound, bound you will be. Not only that: it is a very bold statement—as I told you at the beginning of this course, I shall have to speak to you most boldly. It may frighten you now, but you will come to know by-and-by that it is true, when you think of it, and when you realise in your life the truth of it. For, supposing it is not your nature, freedom is not your nature; by no manner of means can you become free. Supposing you were free and in some way you lost the freedom, then you

cannot regain it, because that shows you were not free to commence with. Had you been free, what could have made you bound? The independent can never be made dependent, otherwise it was not independent, it was an hallucination.

So, of the two sides which will you take? If argument is stated, it comes to this. If you say that the soul was by its own nature pure and free, it naturally follows that there was nothing in this Universe which could make it bound or limited. But, if there was something in nature which could make you bound, it naturally follows that the soul was not free, and your statement that it was free was a delusion. So you have to come to this idea, that the soul was by its nature free. It cannot be otherwise. Freedom means independence of anything outside, and that means that nothing outside itself could work upon it as a cause. The soul was causeless, and hence come all the great ideas that we have. You cannot establish any idea of immortality unless you grant that the soul was by its nature free, or in other words, that it cannot be acted upon by anything outside. For death is an effect produced by something outside of me, showing that my body can be acted upon by something else. I drink some poison and I am killed, showing that my body can be acted upon by something outside that is called poison. If this is true of the soul, the soul was bound. But, if it be true that the soul is free, it naturally follows that nothing outside can work upon the soul; and never will; therefore, the soul will never die, it will be causeless beyond the law of causation. Freedom, immortality, blessedness, all depend on this, that it is beyond the law of causation, beyond this Maya. Very good. Now if your nature was originally perfectly free and we have become bound, that shows that we were not really free. It

was nature. But, on the other side, here is this proposition that we are free, and this idea of bondage is but a delusion. Of these two which will you take? Either make the first a delusion, or make the second a delusion. Certainly I will make the second a delusion. It is more consonant with all my feelings and realizations. I am perfectly aware that I am free by nature, not that this bondage was true and my freedom a delusion.

This discussion you see going on in all philosophies, taken in the crude form. Even in the most modern philosophies, you find the same discussion entering. Here are the two parties. One party says that there is no soul, soul is a delusion. That delusion is being produced by the repeated transit of particles of matter, this combination which you call the body or the brain, and so on; its vibrations and motions and continuous transit of particles here and there, leaving that impression of freedom. There were Buddhistic sects who said, if you take a torch, and whirl it round you rapidly, there will be a circle of light. That does not exist, because the torch is changing place every moment. We are but bundles of little particles, which in the rapid whirling produce this delusion. On the other hand, there is the statement, that this body is true, and the soul does not exist. The other explanation is, that in the rapid interchange of thought matter occurs as a delusion, but matter does not really exist. These remain to the present day, one side claiming that this spirit is a delusion and the other that matter is a delusion. Which side will you take? Of course, we will take the spirit side and deny the matter. The arguments are the same for both sides, only on the spirit side the argument is a little stronger. For nobody has ever seen what matter is. We can only feel ourselves. I never saw a man who could feel matter

outside of himself. Nobody was ever able to jump outside his own soul. Therefore, the argument is a little stronger on the side of the spirit. Secondly, the spirit thought explains the Universe, while materialism does not. Therefore, the materialistic explanation is illogical. This is a crude form of the same thought. If you boil all these philosophies down and analyse them, you will find these two things in collision. So here, too, in a more intricate form, in a more philosophical form, we find the same question about natural purity and freedom, and natural bondage. One side says that the first is a delusion, and the other that the second is the delusion. And here, too, we side with the second, that our bondage is the delusion.

So the solution of the Vedanta is that we are not bound, we are free already. Not only so, but to say or to think that we are bound is dangerous; it is a mistake; it is self-hypnotism. As soon as you say, "I am bound," "I am weak," "I am helpless," woe unto you; you rivet one more chain upon you. Do not say that, do not think it. I have heard of a man who lived in a forest and used to repeat day and night, "Sivoham"—I am the Blessed One—and one day a tiger fell upon the man and dragged him away to kill him, and people on the other side of the river saw it, and heard the voice as long as voice remained in him saying, "Sivoham"—even in the very jaws of the tiger. There have been many such men. There have been cases of men who, while being cut to pieces, have blessed their enemies. "I am He, I am He: and so art thou." I am pure and perfect, and so are all my enemies. You are He, and so am I. That is the position of strength. Nevertheless, there are great and wonderful things in the religions of the Dualists; wonderful is the idea of the Personal God apart from this nature, whom we are to worship

and whom we are to love? Sometimes it is very soothing. But, says the Vedanta, that soothing is something like morphia, the soothing that comes from an opiate, not natural. It brings weakness in the long run, and what this world wants to-day more than it ever did is strengthening. It is weakness, says the Vedanta, which is the cause of all misery in this world. Weakness is the one cause of suffering. We become miserable because we are weak. We steal, rob, lie, or commit any crime, because we are weak. We die because we are weak. We suffer because we are weak. Where there is nothing to weaken us, there is no death or any sorrow. We are miserable through delusion. Give up the delusion and the whole thing vanishes. It is plain and simple indeed. Through all these philosophical discussions and tremendous mental gymnastics we come back to this one religious idea, the simplest in the whole world.

The Monistic Vedanta is the simplest form in which you can put a truth. It was the tremendous mistake made in India, made everywhere else, because they did not look at the principles they arrived at, but only thought of the process, which is very intricate indeed. These tremendous philosophical and logical propositions were alarming to them. They always thought these things could not be made universal, could not be made teachings of everyday practical life, and that under the guise of such a philosophy much laxity of living would arise.

But I do not believe at all that Monistic ideas preached to the world would produce immorality and weakness and so forth. On the contrary, I have reason to believe that it is the only medicine there is. If this be the truth, why let people drink ditchwater when the stream of life is

flowing by? If this be the truth, that they are all pure, why not at this moment teach it to the whole world? Saints and sinners, men, women and children, great or small, why not teach it with the voice of thunder, teach it to every man that is born and ever will come into the world, the man on the throne or the man sweeping the streets, rich or poor? I am the King of kings; there is no king higher than I. I am the God of gods; there is no God higher than I.

It appears now a very big and a very great undertaking, to many it appears very startling, but that is because of superstition, nothing else. By eating all sorts of low and indigestible food, and by starving ourselves, we have made ourselves incompetent to eat a good meal. We have listened to words of weakness from our childhood. It is just the same with ghosts. You always here people say they don't believe in ghosts, but, at the same time, very few do not get a little creepy sensation in the dark. It is simply superstition. So with all these things. This is the one idea that will come out of Vedanta, and the one idea that deserves to live. These books may go or die to-morrow. Whether this idea first flashed into the brains of Hebrews or of people living at the North Pole nobody cares. But this is truth and truth is eternal, and truth itself teaches that it is not the special property of any being. Men and animals and gods are all common recipients of this one truth. Teach it to them. Why make life miserable? Why let people fall into all sorts of superstition? I will give ten thousand lives if twenty of them will give up their superstitions. Not only in this country, but in the land of its very birth, if you tell people this they are frightened. They say that this is for Sannyasins, who give up the world and live in forests; that is all right.

But for us poor householders we must all have some sort of fear, we will have ceremonies, and so on.

Dualistic ideas have ruled the world long enough, and this is the result. Why not make a new experiment? It may take millions of years perhaps for all minds to receive it, but why not begin now? If we have told it to twenty persons in our lives, we have done a great work.

Then there is generally one great idea in India which militates against it. It is this. It is all very well to say, "I am the Pure, the Blessed," but I cannot show it always in my life. That is true; the ideal is always very hard. Every child that is born sees the sky over-head very far away, but is that any reason why we should not strike towards the sky? Would it mend matters to go towards superstition? If we cannot get nectar, would it mend matters for us to drink poison? Would it be any help for us because we cannot realise truth immediately to go into darkness and weakness and superstition?

I have no objection to dualism in many of its forms. I like most of them, but I have objections to every form of teaching which inculcates weakness. That is the one question I put to every one, man, woman or child, when they are in training, physical, mental or spiritual. The question is: Are you strong? Do you feel strength?—for I know it is truth alone that gives strength. I know that truth alone gives life, and nothing but going towards reality will make us strong, and none will reach truth until they are strong. Every system, therefore, which weakens the mind, weakens the brain, makes one superstitious, makes one mope in darkness, always desiring all sorts of morbid impossibilities and mysteries and superstitions; those, therefore, I do not like, because their effect is

dangerous on the human being, and they are all useless. They never bring any good.

Those who have tried may agree with me, that such things always bring morbidity into the human being, make him weak, so weak that in course of time it will be almost impossible for him to receive truth and live up to truth. Strength, therefore, is the one thing that we want. Strengthening is the great medicine for the world's disease. Strengthening is the medicine which the poor must have when tyrannised over by the rich. Strength is the medicine that the ignorant must have when oppressed by the learned; and it is the medicine that sinners must have when tyrannised over by other sinners, and nothing gives such strength as this idea of Monism. Nothing makes us so moral as this idea of Monism. Nothing makes us work so well at our best and highest, as when all the responsibility is thrown upon us. I challenge every one of you. How will you behave if I put a little baby in your hands? Your whole life will be changed for the moment; whatever you be you must become selfless for the time being. You will give up all your criminal ideas as soon as responsibility is thrown upon you, your whole character will change. So if the whole responsibility is thrown upon our own shoulders we are at our highest and best, when we have nobody to grope towards to lay all our blame upon, when we have neither the devil nor a personal God to lay all our evils upon, when we are alone responsible. That takes us to our highest and best. I am responsible for my fate, I am the bringer of good unto myself, I am the bringer of evil. I am the Pure and Blessed One. We must reject all thoughts that assert the contrary. "I never had death nor fear, I have no difference of caste or creed, I had

neither father nor mother, nor birth nor death, nor friend nor foe, for I am Existence, Knowledge and Bliss Absolute; I am the Blissful One, I am the Blissful One. I am not bound either by virtue or vice, by happiness or misery. Pilgrimages and books and the Vedas, and all these ceremonials can never bind me. I do not eat, the body is not mine, nor the superstitions that come to the body, nor the decay that comes to the body, for I am Existence, Knowledge and Bliss Absolute; I am the Blissful One, I am the Blissful One."

This, says the Vedânta, is the only prayer that the masses should have. This is the only way to reach the goal, to tell ourself, and to tell everybody else that we are He. And as you go on repeating, strength comes. He who limps at first will get stronger and stronger, the voice will increase in volume until it takes possession of our hearts and ideas, and will course through our veins, and permeate all our body. The delusion will vanish as the sunlight becomes more and more effulgent, load after load of ignorance will vanish, and then will come a time when the whole has disappeared and the Sun, and the Sun alone, will be left. This Vedântic idea of course to many seems very terrible, but that is, just as I have said, on account of superstition. There are people in this country who, if I told them there was no such being as the devil, will think all religion is gone. Many people have said to me, how can there be religion without a devil? They say, how can there be religion without someone to direct us? How can we live without being ruled by somebody? We like to be so treated. We have become used to it and like it. We are not happy until we feel we have been reprimanded by somebody every day. The same super-

stition! But, however terrible it may seem now, the time will come when we shall look back, each one of us, and smile at every one of those superstitions which had covered the pure and eternal soul, and repeat with gladness, with truth, and with strength, I am He, and was He, and always will be He.

MAYA AND ILLUSION.

ALMOST all of you have heard of the word *maya.* Generally it is used, though I am afraid very wrongly, to denote illusion, or delusion, or some such thing, but as this theory forms, as it were, one of the pillars upon which the Vedanta rests, it is necessary that it should be properly understood, and I ask a little patience of you, for there is great danger of being unpresented in expounding the theory of *maya.* The oldest idea of *maya* that we can find in Vedic literature is, where this word is used in the sense of delusion, but then the real theory has not been reached. We find such passages as—*Indro mayabhih gururupamiyate,* "Indra through his *maya* assumed the form of Guru." Here it is true the word *maya* means something like magic. So we find various other passages, always taking the same meaning. The word *maya* then drops out of sight altogether. In the meanwhile the idea is developing. We find later on the question is raised, why cannot we know this secret of the Universe, and the answer that is given is very significant—*Niharena pravrita jalpya asutripah uktasa sah charanti.* "Because we talk in vain, and because we are satisfied with the things of the senses, and because we are running after desires; therefore, we cover this reality, as it were, with a mist." Here the word *maya* is not used at all, but we get one idea, that the reason they attribute for our ignorance is a kind of mist that has come between us and the truth. Much later on, in one of the latest Upanishads, we find the word

maya, reappearing, but, by this time, a good deal of transformation, has been worked upon it, a mass of new meaning has by this time attached itself to the word. Theories have been propounded and repeated: others have been taken up; until at last the idea of *maya* has become a fixed quantity. We read in the Svetas'vatara Upanishad—*Mayantu prakritim vidyat mayinantu mahesvaram.* "Know nature to be *maya* and the mind the ruler of this *maya* is the Lord Himself." Coming to our philosophers, we find that this word *maya* has been manipulated in various fashions, until we come to the great Sankaracharya. Perhaps, the word *maya*, or the theory was manipulated a little by the Buddhists too, but in the hands of Buddhists it became very much like what is called Idealism, and that is the meaning that is now generally given to the word *maya*. When the Hindu says the world is *maya*, at once people get the idea that the world is an illusion. This interpretation has some basis, as coming through the Buddhistic philosophers, because there was one section of philosophers who did not believe in the external world at all. But the *maya* of the Vedanta, in its last developed form, is neither Idealism nor Realism, neither it is theory. It is a simple statement of facts—what we are, and what we see around us. As I have told you before, the minds of the people from whom the Vedas came, were intent upon following principles, discovering principles. As it were, they had no time to work upon details, or to wait for them; they wanted to go deep into the heart of things. Something beyond was calling them, as it were, and they could not wait. As such, we find that, scattered all through the Upanishads, the details of subjects which we now call modern science, are often very erroneous, but, at the same time, their prin-

ciples are these. For instance, the idea of ether which is one of the latest theories of modern science, is there already, in forms much more developed than what the modern man's scientific ether is now; but it was in principle: when they wanted to demonstrate the workings of that ether principle, they made many mistakes. The theory of the all-pervading life principle, of which all life in this universe is but a differing manifestation, is there already in the Vedas—in the Brahmanas. There is a long hymn in the Samhitas in which this *prana* is praised, of which all life is but a manifestation. By-the-bye, it may interest some of you to know that there are theories about the origin of life on this earth in the Vedic philosophy, pretty much the same as that which has been advanced by some of your modern European scientists. You, of course, all know that there is a theory that life came from other planets, which it is a settled doctrine that life comes in this way from the moon with some Vedic philosophers.

Coming to principles, we find them very courageous and wonderfully bold in propounding large and generalised theories. So the answer which they wanted to get about the solution of the mystery of this Universe from the external world they got as much as was possible. The detail workings of modern science do not bring the question one step nearer to solution, because the principles have failed. If the theory of ether failed in ancient times to give a solution of the mystery of the Universe, working out the details of that ether theory will not bring us much nearer to the truth. If the theory of the all-pervading life failed as a theory of this Universe, it would not mean anything more if worked out in detail, for the details do not change the principle of the Universe. What I mean

is, that in their enquiry into the principle, the Hindu thinkers were as bold as, and in some cases much bolder than, the moderns. The principle was going on, and they found some of the biggest generalizations that have yet been reached, and some are there still as theories, which modern science has yet to get, perhaps as theories even. For instance, they not only arrived at the ether theory, but went beyond a classified mind also, as a still more rarefied ether. Beyond that, they found a still *more* rarefied ether. Yet there is no solution, it does not answer the problem. No amount of knowledge of the external world would answer the problem. We find here we were just beginning to know a little; wait a few thousand years and we shall get the solution. "No," says the Vedantist, for he has proved beyond all doubt that the mind is limited; we cannot go beyond certain limits, we cannot go beyond time, space and the law of causation. As no man can jump out of his own self, so no man can go beyond the limits that have been put upon us by the laws of time and space. Every attempt to solve the law of causation, time and space, would be futile, because the very attempt would have to be made by taking for granted the existence of these three. It cannot be. What form does the statement of the existence of the world take then? "This world has no existence,"—*Jaganmithya.* What is meant thereby? That it has no existence absolute. It exists only as relative to my mind, to yours, and to the minds of everybody else. We see this world with the five senses. If we had another sense, we would see in it something else. If we had still another sense, it would appear as something yet different. So on we go. It has, therefore, no existence: that unchangeable, immovable, infinite existence it has not. Nor can it be called non-existence, seeing that it exists,

and we have to work in and through it. It is a mixture of this existence and non-existence.

Coming from abstractions to common, every day details of our lives, we find that our whole life is a mixture of this contradiction of existence and non-existence. There is this contradiction in knowledge. It seems that man can know everything, if he only wants to know; but before he has gone a few steps he finds an adamantine wall which he cannot move. All his work is in a circle, and he cannot go beyond that circle. The problems which are nearest and dearest unto him, are impelling him and calling on him day and night for a solution, but he cannot solve them, because he cannot go beyond his intellect. And yet the desire is implanted strongly in him. Still we know that the only good is to be obtained by controlling and checking these impulses. With every breath, every impulse of our heart asks us to be selfish. At the same time, there is some power beyond us which says that it is unselfishness which is alone good. Every child is a born optimist; he is dreaming golden dreams. In youth he becomes still more optimistic. It is hard for a young man to believe that there is such a thing as death, such a thing as defeat or degradation. Old age comes, and life is a mass of ruin. Dreams have vanished into air, and the old man has become a pessimist. Thus we are going on, from one extreme to the other, buffeted by Nature, without hope, without limit, without knowing the bounds, without knowing where we are going. It reminds me of a celebrated song as written in the *Lalita Vistara*, in the biography of Buddha. Buddha was born, says the book, as the saviour of mankind, but he forgot himself in the luxuries of his palace, and some angels came to sing a song to rouse him up, and the burden of the whole song is, We are floating down this river, continually

changing, no stop and no rest. So are all our lives, going on and on without knowing any rest. What are we to do? The man who has enough to eat and drink is an optimist, and he says, do not speak of misery, for it frightens him. Tell not him of the sorrows and the sufferings of the world; go to him and tell that it is all good. "Yes, I am safe," says he, "look at me, I have a nice house to live in. I do not care for cold; therefore do not bring these horrible pictures before me." But, on the other hand, there are others dying of cold and hunger. Go and teach *them* that it is all good. There is a man who has suffered tremendously in this life, and he will not hear of anything joyful, of anything beautiful, of anything that is good. "Frighten everybody," says he: "why should it be that anybody should laugh while I am weeping? I must make them all weep with me, for I am miserable, and they must all be miserable; that is my only consolation." Thus we are going on between optimism and pessimism. Then there is the tremendous fact of death. The whole world is going to death; everything is dying. All our progress, our vanities, our reforms, our luxuries, our wealth, our knowledge, have that one end—death. That is all, that is certain. Cities come and go, empires rise and fall, planets break into pieces and crumble into dust, to be blown about by the atmospheres of the different planets. Thus it is going on from time without beginning. What is the goal? Death is the goal of everything. Death is the goal of life, of beauty, of wealth, of power, of virtue too. Saints die and sinners die, kings die and beggars die. They are all going to death, and yet this tremendous clinging on to life exists. Somehow, we do not know why, we have to cling on to life; we cannot give it up. And this is *maya*.

The mother is nursing a child with great care; all

her soul, her life, is in that child. The child grows, becomes big, and perchance becomes a blackguard and a brute, kicks her and beats her every day; and yet the mother clings on to the child, and when her reason awakes she covers it up with the idea of love. She little thinks it is not love, it is something which has got hold of her nerves, she cannot shake it off; however she may try, she cannot shake off the bondage she has—and this is *maya*. We are all after the Golden Fleece. Every one of us thinks that this will be ours, but very few of them are in the world. Every reasonable man sees that the chance is perhaps one in twenty millions for this golden fleece, yet every one must struggle for it and the majority never get anything. And this is *maya*. Death is stalking day and night over this earth of ours, but at the same time we always believe that we shall live eternally. A question was once asked of King Yudhisthira, "What is the most wonderful thing on this earth?" And the king replied, "Every day people are dying around us, and yet men think they will never die." And this is *maya*. This tremendous contradiction in our intellect, in our knowledge, in our life, in our facts, everywhere this tremendous amount of contradiction, pleasure succeeding pain, and pain pleasure. A reformer arises and wants to remedy the evils that are existing in a certain nation; and before they have been remedied, twenty thousand evils arise in another corner. It is an old house that is falling; patch it up in one place, the ruin extends to another corner. In India our reformers cry and preach against the evils which enforced widowhood brings to Indian women. In the West non-marriage is the great evil. Help the unmarried on one side; they are suffering. Help the widows on the other; *they* are suffering. Like the old rheumatism in the body, drive it from the head and

it goes to the body, and from there to the feet. Some people become richer than others, learning, and wealth, and culture become their exclusive possession. Knowledge is so great and grand, culture is so beautiful! It is in the hands of a select few! Terrible is the thought! Reformers come, distribute it over a large mass. More happiness is brought to the large mass in the sense of physical happiness, but, perhaps, as culture comes, this physical happiness vanishes; which way shall we go, for the knowledge of happiness brings the knowledge of unhappiness? The least bit of happiness that we enjoy is somewhere causing the same amount of misery. This is the state of things. The young, perhaps, do not see it clearly, but those who have lived long enough and those who have struggled enough, will understand it. And this is *maya*. These things are going on day and night, and to find a solution of this problem would be impossible. Why should it be thus? It would be an impossible question to answer, because the question cannot be logically formulated. There is neither *how* nor *why* to this. We cannot grasp it before we can answer it; we do not know what it is, before we can answer. We cannot make it steady one moment, eluding our grasp every minute. We are like blind machines. We may think back upon our unselfishness, our attempts to do good to others, but we had to do this, we could not help.

I have to stand up and lecture to you and you have to sit and listen; we cannot help it. And you will go home, and some of you may have learnt a thing or two, while, perhaps, others will think the man has talked nonsense. I will go home thinking I have been lecturing. And this is *maya*.

So *maya* is a statement of the fact of this Universe, of

how it is going on. People generally get frightened when these things are told to them. Bold we must be. Hiding facts is not the way to find a remedy. As the hare, you all know, hunted down by dogs, puts its head down and thinks itself safe, so, when we run into optimism or pessimism, we are doing just like the hare, and that is not a remedy. There are, on the other side, objections, and these objections, you may remark, are always from people who have more of the things of life, or of enjoyments. In this country (England) it is very difficult to become a pessimist. Every one tells me how wonderfully the world is going on, how progressive, but what he himself is, is his own world. Old questions arise; Christianity must be the only religion of the world, because Christian nations are prosperous! But that would defeat its own object, because the prosperity of the Christian nations depends on the misfortune of non-Christian nations. There must be some to prey upon. Suppose the whole world were to become Christian, then the Christian nations would become poor, because there would be no non-Christian nations for them to prey upon. So the argument would kill itself. Animals are living upon the plants, men upon animals, and, worst of all, upon each other, the strong upon the weak; this is going on all round, and this is *maya*. What solution do you apply to this? We hear every day of such and such explanations, and are told that in the long run it will be all good. Suppose it be possible—which is very much to be doubted—but let us take it for granted, why should it be, this diabolical way of doing good? Why cannot good be done through good, instead of through these diabolical methods? The descendants of the human beings of to-day will be happy; then what does it matter to me that I am suffering so much? This is *maya*; there is no solution to it. Again, we often

hear that it is one of the features of evolution that it eliminates evil, and this evil being continually eliminated from the world, at last there will remain only good and good alone. That is very nice to hear, and it panders to our vanities, at least of those of us who have got enough in this world, who have not a hard struggle to face every day, and are not being crushed under the wheels of this so-called evolution. It is very good and comforting to them indeed. The common herds may suffer, but they do not care; let them die, they do not care for them. Very good, but yet this argument is fallacious from beginning to end. It takes for granted, in the first place, that manifested good and evil in this world are fixed quantities. In the second place, it makes a still worse assumption, that the amount of good is an increasing quantity, and the amount of evil is a constant quantity. So if evil is being eliminated in this way by what they call evolution, there will come a time when this evil will be eliminated and what remains will be all good. Very easy to say, but can it be proved that evil is a fixed quantity? Is it not increasing all the time? Take the man who lives in a forest, who does not know even how to cultivate the mind, cannot read a book, has not heard of such a thing as writing. Cut that man into twenty pieces to-night, and to-morrow he is all right. Run a bayonet through his body and take it out, and he is all right again, while we, who are more cultured, get scratched in the streets and die. Machines are making things cheap, making for progress and evolution, but are crushing down millions that one may become rich, making one richer than others, and thousands at the same time poorer and poorer, making slaves of whole masses of human beings. That way it is going on. The animal man has enjoyments only in the senses, his pains and pleasures are only in the

senses. If he does not get enough to eat, he is miserable or if something happens to his body, he is miserable. In the senses, both his misery and his happiness begin and end. And as soon as this man progresses, as soon as his horizon of happiness increases, his horizon of unhappiness increases proportionately. The man in the forest does not know what it is to be jealous, to be in the Law Court, to pay taxes regularly, what is to be blamed by society, to be watched day and night by the most tremendous tyranny that human diabolism ever invented, prying into the secrets of every human heart. He does not know how man becomes a thousand times more diabolical than any other animal, with all his vain knowledge, and with all his pride. Thus it is that, as we emerge out of the senses, we develop higher powers of enjoyment, and at the same time, we have to develop higher powers of suffering too; the nerves, on the other hand, are becoming finer, and capable of suffering more. Often, in every society, we find that the ignorant, common man, if he is abused does not feel much, but he feels a good thrashing. But the gentleman cannot bear a single word of abuse, he has become so finely nerved. Misery has increased with his susceptibility to happiness. This does not go much to prove the philosopher's case. As we increase our power to be happy, we are always increasing our power to suffer; and, in my humble opinion, if we advance in our power to become happy in arithmetical progression, we shall progress, on the other hand, in the power to become miserable in geometrical progression. They who live in a forest do not know much of society, while we, who are progressing, know that the more we can progress the more we can feel, and nobody knows whether three-quarters of us are not born lunatics. This is *maya*.

Thus we find that *maya* is not a theory for the expla-

nation of the world ; it is simply a statement of facts as they exist, that the very basis of our being is condradiction, that everywhere we go, we have to move through this tremendous condradiction, that wherever there is good there must be evil, and wherever there is evil there must be good, wherever there is life death must follow it as its shadow, and every one who smiles must have to weep, and whoever weeps must smile also. Nor can this state of things be remedied. We may verily imagine that there will be a place where there will be only good, and no evil, that there will be places where we shall only laugh and never weep. Such a thing is impossible in the very nature of things, for the condition will be the same. Wherever there is the power of producing a smile in us, there lurks the power of producing tears in our eyes. Wherever there is the power of producing a feeling of happiness in us, there lurks somewhere the power of making us miserable.

Thus the Vedanta philosophy is neither optimistic nor pessimistic. It voices both of these, and takes things as they are, that this world is a mixture of good and evil, happiness and misery; increase the one, and the other must increase with it. There will never be a good world because the very idea is a condradiction in terms ; nor can there be a bad world. At the same time, it finds out one great secret by this analysis, and it is this, that good and bad are not two cut-and-dried, separate existences. There is not one thing in this world of ours which you can label as good, and good alone, and there is not one thing in this world of ours which you can label as bad, and bad alone. The very same phenomenon which is appearing to be good now, may appear to be bad to-morrow. The same thing which is producing misery in one, may produce happiness in another. The fire that burns the child may cook a good meal for a

starving man. The same nerves that carry the sensations of misery carry also the sensations of happiness. To stop evil, therefore, the only way is to stop the good also; there is no other way that is sure. To stop death, we shall have to stop life also. Life without death, and happiness without misery are contradictions, and neither can be true because both of them are manifestations of the same thing. What I thought to be good yesterday, I do not think to be good now. In all my life, when I look back upon it, and see my ideals that have been at different times, I find this to be so. At one time, my ideal was to drive a strong pair of horses; I do not think so now. At another time, when I was a little child, I thought, if I could learn to make a certain kind of sweetmeat, I should be perfectly happy. At another time, I thought I should be perfectly happy if I had a wife and children and plenty of money. I laugh at them all now as childish nonsense. The Vedanta says, there must come a time when we look back and laugh at these ideals of ours which made us afraid of giving up our individuality. Each one wants to keep this body and not give it up, and our idea is that if we can keep the body for an indefinite time we shall be very happy, but there will come a time when we shall laugh at that too. Now, if such be the state of things, we are in a state of helpless contradiction, neither existence, nor non-existence but a mixture of them both; neither misery, nor happiness, but a mixture of them both. Then what is the use of Vedanta, and all other philosophies and religions? And, above all, what is the use of doing good work? This is a question that comes to the mind, for people will always ask you if such is the state of things, that whenever you try to do good the same evil remains, and whenever you try to create happiness there will always be mountains high

of misery—What is the use? The answer is, in the first place, that you have got to work in the way of lessening misery, for that is the only way to make yourselves happy. Every one of us finds it out sooner or later in our lives. The bright ones find it out a little earlier, and the dull ones a little later. The dull ones pay very dearly for the discovery and the bright ones less dearly. In the second place, apart from that, although we know there never will come a time when this Universe will be full of happiness and without misery, still this is the work to be done; although misery increases, still, let us do our part at the same time. Both these forces will make the Universe live until there comes a time when we awake from our dreams and give up this building of mud-pies, which we are doing all the time, for it is true that it is only a building of mud-pies. That one lesson we shall have to learn. It will take a long, long time for us to learn. The Vedanta says the *Infinite* has become the *Finite*. Attempts have been made in Germany to build a system of philosophy on such a basis. Such attempts are made even in England now, but the analysis of the position of these philosophers is this, that the Infinite is trying to express itself in this Universe. Very good, and therefore there must come a time when the Infinite will succeed in expressing itself. As such the absolute state is a lower state than the manifested, because in the manifested state the absolute expresses itself, and we are to help this expression more and more, until the Infinite on that side empties itself out on this side. It is very nice, and we have used the words *infinite* and *manifestation* and *expression*, and so on, but philosophers naturally ask for a logical fundamental basis that the Finite can be the Infinite, that one can be twenty millions, say. The Absolute and the Infinite become this Universe under limita-

tions. Everything here, therefore, must be limited, everything that comes out of the senses, or through the mind, or through the intellect, must of necessity be limited, and the limited to be the unlimited is simply absurd, and can never be.

The Vedanta, on the other hand, says that it is true that the Absolute or the Infinite is trying to express itself in the Finite, but there will come a time when it will find that it is impossible, and that it will have to beat a retreat, and this beating a retreat is the real beginning of religion. Renunciation is the beginning of religion. It is very hard for modern people to talk of renunciation. I stand, as it were, as it was said of me in America, as a man who has come out of a world that has been dead and buried and gone these five thousand years, and talks of renunciation. So says, perhaps, the English philosopher. Yet it is true that that is the only fact in life, renounce and give up. Struggle hard and try your best to find any other way. Then comes a time when the mind awakes, awakes from this long and dreary dream; the child gives up its play and wants to go back to mother. It finds—

Najatukamah kamanam upabhogena samyati,
Havisha krishnavartmeva bhuya evabhi vardhate.

"Desires are never satisfied by the enjoyment of desires, they only increase the more, as butter poured upon fire increases the flame all the time." So are all sense enjoyments, all intellectual enjoyments. So are all the enjoyments of which the human soul is capable. They are all for nothing, they are within *maya*, within this net-work beyond which we cannot go. We may run through it, through infinite time and find no end, and whenever we struggle to get a little bit of enjoyment, a mass of misery will be on our back. How awful will be the state of

things! And when I try to think of this, I cannot but think that this theory of *maya*, this statement that it is all *maya*, is the best and only explanation. What an amount of misery there is in this world, and if you travel among various nations you will find out this, that one nation has attempted to cure its evils by one means, and another by another. The very same evil has been taken up by the various races, and attempts have been made in various ways to check the evil, yet no nation has succeeded. If it has been minimised in one point, a mass of evil has been crowded into another point. Thus it goes. The Hindus, to produce a little chastity in the race, have degraded all their children by child-marriage, which, in the long run, has degraded the race. At the same time, I cannot deny that this child-marriage makes the race more chaste. What would you have? If you want the nation to be more chaste, you degrade men and women physically by this awful child-marriage. On the other hand, are you safe on your side? No, because chastity is the life of a nation. Do you not find in history that the first death-sign of a nation has come through unchastity? When that has entered, the end of the race is in sight. Where shall we get a solution of these miseries then? If parents select husbands and wives for their own children, then this evil of love is prevented. The daughters of India are more practical than sentimental. Very little of poetry remains in their lives. Again, if people select their own husbands and wives, that does not bring much happiness. The Indian woman is very happy; there is scarcely a case of quarrelling between husband and wife. On the other hand, in the United States, where the greatest liberty obtains, scarcely is there a happy home. There may be some, but the number of unhappy homes and marriages

is so large that it passes all description. Scarcely could I go to a meeting or a society but I found three-quarters of the women present had turned out their husbands and children. It is so here, there and everywhere. What does it show? That, after all, not much happiness has been gained by all these ideals. We all struggle for happiness, and before we get a little on one side, on the other side there begins unhappiness.

Shall we not work to do good then? Yes, with more zest than ever, but what this knowledge will do for us is to break down our fanaticism. The Englishman will no more become a fanatic to curse the Hindu—"Oh, the diabolical Hindu, how he treats his women!" He will have learnt to respect the customs of different nations. There will be less of fanaticism and more work; fanatics cannot work; they waste three-fourths of their energy. It is what they call the level-headed, calm, practical man who works. Mere ranting fanatics do not do much. So the power to work will increase from this idea. Knowing that this is the state of things, there will be more patience. The sight of misery or of evil will not be able to throw us off our balance and make us run after shadows. Therefore, patience will come to us, knowing that the world will have to go on in this way. Say, for instance, that all men will have become good, then the animals will have become men, and will have to go through the same state, and so the plants. But only one thing is certain; the mighty river is rushing towards the ocean; and there are bits of straw and paper in the stream, which are trying to get back, but we are sure that the time will come when each one of these pieces will be drawn towards that Infinite ocean. So, in this life, with all its miseries and sorrows, its joys and smiles and tears, one thing is certain, that it is rushing towards that Infinite ocean, and it is only

a question of time when you and I, and plants, and animals, and every particle of life that exists anywhere must come into that Infinite ocean of life, unto freedom, and unto God.

Let me repeat, once more, because we always make the mistake, that the Vedantic position is neither pessimism nor optimism. It does not say that this world is all evil or all good. It says that our evil is of no more value than our good, and our good of no more value than our evil. They are all bound together in this way. This is the world; and knowing this you work with patience. What for? Why should we work? If this is the state of things, what shall we do? Why not become agnostics? The modern agnostics also know there is no solution of this problem, no getting out of this veil of *maya*, as we should say in our language; therefore, be satisfied and enjoy things. Here, again, is a mistake, a tremendous mistake, a most illogical mistake. And it is this. What do you mean by the life around you? Do you mean by life only the senses? In this every one of us differs only slightly from the brutes. I am sure that no one is present here, whose life is only in the senses. Then this present life means something more than that. Our feelings and thoughts and all that are part and parcel of our life; and is not the struggle towards the great ideal, towards perfection, one of the most important components of what we call life? According to the agnostics, we must take care of life as it is. But this life means our little joys and sorrows, and all that, and, above all, this tremendous search after the ideal, the backbone of life, going towards perfection. We must have that, and, therefore, we cannot be agnostics, or take the agnostic world at sight. The agnostic position takes this life to be all that exists, *minus* this latter component,

and this he has found out, cannot be known, wherefore he must give up the search. This is what is called *maya*, this Nature, this Universe. This, according to the Vedantist, is Nature. Now all religions are more or less attempts to get beyond this, the crudest, or the most developed, expressed through mythology, or symbology, or through the abstractions of philosophy, through stories of gods, or angels, or demons, or hobgoblins, through stories of saints, or seers, or great men, or prophets, all have that one object,—they are all trying to get beyond these limitations, to find something which is beyond these. In one word, they are all struggling towards liberty. Man has known, consciously or unconsciously, that he is bound; he is not what he wants to be. It was taught to him at the very time, the very moment he began to look around, that very moment he found he was bound, and he also found that there was something in him which wanted to fly beyond, where the body could not follow, something which was as yet chained down by this limitation. Even in the lowest of religious ideas, where departed ancestors, and other spirits, mostly violent and cruel, lurking about the house of their friends, fond of bloodshed and strong drink—even there we find that one common factor, that of freedom. The man who wants to worship the gods, sees in them above all things greater freedom than in himself; if a door is closed, the gods can get through walls and so on; the walls have no limitations to them. This one idea of liberty is increasing, until it comes to the ideal of a Personal God, and that is the centre of the ideal that God is some one beyond the limitation of *maya*. I hear, as it were, a voice before me, I feel as if this question were being discussed by those ancient sages of India, in some of those forest retreats, and in one of them even the oldest and the holiest fail to reach the

solution, but a young boy is standing up in the midst of them and declaring—

S'rinvantu visve amritasya puttrah,
Aye dhamani divyani tasthuh ||5||.

*** *** ***

Vedaham etam purusham mahantam,
Adityavarnam tamash parastat,
Tamevam viditva ati mrityum eti,
Nanyah panthavidyate ayanaya ||8||

"Hear ye children of immortality, hear ye who live in the highest places, I have found the way. There is a way out beyond the darkness by knowing Him who is beyond this darkness." We find this assertion as coming from the same Upanishad. This *maya* is there; it is terrible; to work through *mayá* is impossible. If a man says, I will sit beside this river and I will ford the river when it has run down into the ocean, that man would be as much correct as the man who says he will work till this world has become all good, and he will then enjoy this world, neither will one come or the other. The way is not with *maya* but against *maya*. This is another fact to learn. We are not born helpers of Nature, but competitors with Nature. We are the bond-masters, and we are trying to bind ourselves down. Why is this house here? Nature did not give it. Nature says, go and live in the forest. Man says I will build a house and fight with Nature and he does. The whole history of humanity is a continuous fight against the so-called laws of Nature, and man gains in the end. Coming into the eternal world, there too the same fight is going on, this fight between the animal man and the spiritual man, between light and darkness, and here too man becomes victorious. He, as it were, cuts his way out of Nature to this idea of liberty. We have seen so far, then, that here

is a statement of *maya*, and beyond this *maya* the Vedantic philosophers find something which is not bound by *mayá*, and if we can get where that stands, certainly we are beyond *maya*. This is the common property of all religions, what you call Theism. But with the Vedânta, it is just for the beginning of religion and not the end. The idea of a Personal God, the ruler and creator of this Universe, as he has been styled *Mayadhishtitah*, the ruler of *maya* or Nature is not the end of these Vedantic ideas, it is just at the beginning and the idea grows and grows until the Vedântist finds that He Who was standing outside was he himself Who was in reality inside. It was the very One Who was free, Who thought He was bound.

MAYA AND THE CONCEPTION OF GOD.

We have seen how the idea of Mâyâ, which forms, as it were, one of the basic doctrines of the Advaita Vedânta, is, in its germ, found even in the Samhitas, and that in reality all the ideas which are developed in the Upanishads are to be found already in the Samhitas in some form or other. Most of you are by this time perfectly acquainted with the idea of Mâyâ, and know that it is sometimes very erroneously explained as illusion, so that when the Universe is said to be Mâyâ, that also would have to be explained as being illusion. The translation of the word is neither happy nor correct. Mâyâ is not a theory, it is simply a statement of facts about the Universe as it exists, and to understand Maya we must go back to the Samhitas and begin with the conception in the germ. We have seen how the ideas of these Devas came. At the same time these Devas were at first only powerful beings, nothing more. Most of you are horrified when reading the old scriptures, whether of the Greeks, the Hebrews, the Persians, or others, to find that the ancient gods sometimes did things which, to us, are very repugnant, but when reading these books, we entirely forget that we are persons of the nineteenth century, and these gods were beings existing thousands of years ago, and we also forget that the people who worshipped these gods found nothing incongruous in their characters, found nothing to frighten them in depicting their gods as they did, because they were very much like themselves. I may also remark that this is the one great lesson we have to learn throughout our

lives. In judging others we always judge them by our own ideals. That is not as it should be. Every one must be judged according to his own ideal, and not by that of any one else. In all our dealings with our fellow-beings we constantly labour under this mistake, and I am of opinion that the vast majority of our quarrels and fights with our fellow-beings arise simply from this one cause, that we are always trying to judge other gods by our own, other ideals by our ideals, and others' motives from our motives. Under certain circumstances I might do a certain thing, and when I see another person taking the same course I think he has also the same motive actuating him, little dreaming that although the effect may be the same, yet many thousands of causes may produce the same effect. He may have performed the action with quite a different motive from what would impel me to do the same thing. So in judging of those ancient religions we must not take the ordinary standpoint to which we incline in our judgment of others, but must throw ourselves, as it were, into the position of thought in those early times.

The idea of the cruel and ruthless Jehovah in the Old Testament has frightened many—but why? What right have they to assume that the Jehovah of the ancient Jews must represent the conventional idea of God of the present day? And at the same time we must not forget that there will come men after us who will laugh at our ideas of religion and God in the same way that we laugh at those of the ancients. Yet through all those various conceptions runs the golden thread of unity, and it is the purpose of the Vedanta to unfold this thread. "I am the thread that runs through all these various ideas, each one of which is like one pearl," says the Lord Krishna; and that is the duty of Vedanta, to establish this connecting thread, how-

ever incongruous, hideous, horrible, or disgusting may have been these ideas, when judged according to the conceptions of to-day. When these ideas had the setting of past times they were harmonious, they were not more hideous than our present ideas. It is only when we try to take them out of these settings and apply them to our own present circumstances, that the hideousness becomes obvious. It is all gone and dead and past. Just as the old Jew has developed into the keen, modern, sharp Jew, and the ancient Aryan into the intellectual Hindu, similarly Jehovah has grown, and Devas have grown. The great mistake is in recognising the evolution of the worshippers, while we do not acknowledge the evolution of the God. He is not credited with the advance that his devotees have made. That is to say, you and I, as representing ideas, have grown; these gods also, as representing ideas, have grown. This may seem somewhat curious to you—how can God grow? In the same sense man never grows. We will see later on how the real man behind each one of these manifestations is immovable, unchangeable, pure and always perfect; and in the same way the idea of God that we form is a mere manifestation, our own creation. Behind that is the real God who never changes, the ever pure, the immutable. But the manifestations are always changing, revealing the reality behind more and more. When it reveals more of the fact behind, it is called progression, when it hides more of the fact behind, it is called retrogression. Thus, as we grow, so the gods grow. From the common-sense point of view, just as we reveal ourselves, as we evolve, so the gods reveal themselves.

We shall now be in a position to understand the theory of Mâyâ. In stating all the religions of the world the one question they propose to discuss is this: Why is

there this disharmony in the Universe? Why is there this evil in the Universe? We do not find this question in the very primitive inception of religious ideas because the world did not appear incongruous to the primitive man. Circumstances around him were not inharmonious; there was no clash of opinions; no antagonism of good and evil. There was merely the fight in his own heart between something which said yea, and something which said nay. The primitive man was a man of impulse. He did what occurred to him, and tried to bring out into his muscles whatever thought got into his mind, and he never stopped to judge, and very little to check impulses which came into his mind. So with these gods, they were also creatures of impulse. Indra comes and shatters the forces of the demons. Jehovah is pleased with someone and displeased with someone else, for what reason no one knows or asks; for the habit of inquiry had not then arisen, and whatever he does is right. There is no idea of good or evil. The Devas did many wicked things in our sense of the word; again and again Indra and other gods are doing very wicked things, but to the worshippers of Indra the ideas of wickedness and evil did not occur, so they did not question.

With the advance of ethical ideas came the fight. There arose a certain sense in man; different languages and nations called it by different names, and it acted as a checking power, for the impulses of the human heart are the voice of God, or the result of past education, and so forth, but whatever it is called the effect is the same. There is one impulse in our minds which says, do. Behind it rises another voice which says, do not. There is one set of ideas in our mind which is always struggling to get outside through the channels of the senses, and behind that

although it may be thin and weak, an infinitely small voice which says, do not go outside. The two beautiful Sanskrit words for those phenomena are *pravritti* and *nivritti*, circling forward and circling inward. It is the circling forward which is leading all our actions. Religion begins with this circling inward. Religion begins with this "do not." Spirituality begins with this "do not." When the "do not" is not there, religion has not begun. And this "do not" came; men's ideas have grown in spite of the brutal fighting gods which they had.

A little love got into the hearts of mankind. It was very small indeed, and even now it is not much greater. It was at first confined to a tribe, embracing, perhaps, members of their own tribes; these gods loved their tribes and each god was a tribal god, the protector of that tribe. And sometimes the members of those tribes would think of themselves as the descendants of that god, just as the clans in different nations think that they are the common descendants of someone who was the founder of the clan. There were in ancient times, and even now, some people claiming to be descendants not only of these gods, but also of the Sun and Moon. You read in the ancient Sanskrit books of the great heroic emperors of the solar dynasty. They were first worshippers of the Moon and Sun, and gradually came to think of themselves as descendants of the god of the Sun, of the Moon, and so forth. So when these tribal ideas began to grow there came a little love, some slight idea of duties towards each other, a little social organisation, and immediately began the idea, how can we live together without bearing and forbearing? How can one man live with another man—even one—without having some time or other to check his impulses, restrain himself, forbear from doing things which his mind would prompt

him to do. It is impossible. Thus comes the idea of restraint. The whole social fabric is based upon that idea of restraint, and we all know that the man or woman who has not learnt the great lesson of bearing and forbearing leads a most miserable life.

Now when these ideas of religion came, a glimpse of something higher, more ethical, dawned upon the intellects of mankind. The old gods were found to be incongruous, these boisterous, fighting, drinking, beef-eating gods of the ancients, whose delight was in the smell of burning flesh and libations of strong liquor. Sometimes Indra drank so much that he fell upon the ground and began to talk unintelligibly. These gods could no longer be tolerated. The notion had arisen of inquiring into motives, and the gods had to come in for their share of inquiry. What is the reason for such an action of such and such a god?—and the reason was wanting. Therefore men gave up these gods, or rather they developed higher ideas of gods; they collected together all the actions and qualities of the gods which they could not harmonise and they kept those which they could understand and harmonise, and combining these, labelled them with one name, Deva-Deva, the God of gods of the Universe. The god to be worshipped was no more a simple symbol of power; something more was required than power. He was an ethical god; he loved mankind, did good to mankind. But the idea of god still remained. They increased his ethical significance, and increased also his power. He became the most ethical being in the Universe, as well as almost Almighty.

But all this patchwork would not do. As the explanation assumed greater proportion, the difficulty which it wanted to solve did the same. If qualities of the god increased in arithmetical progression, the difficulty and doubt

increased in geometrical progression. The difficulty of Jehovah was very little to the difficulty of the God of the Universe, and this question remains to the present day. Why should, under the reign of an Almighty and All-loving God of the Universe, such diabolical things be allowed to remain? Why so much more misery than happiness? and so much more wickedness than good? We may shut our eyes to all these things, but the fact still remains, this world is a hideous world. At best it is the hell of Tantalus and nothing else. Here we are with strong impulses, and stronger ideas for sense enjoyments and nothing outside to fill them. There rises a wave which impels us forward in spite of our own will, and as soon as we move one step comes a blow. We are all doomed to live here and die here like Tantalus. Ideals come into our head, away beyond the limit of our sense ideals, but if we want to feel them we never can see them fulfilled. On the other hand, we are crushed into atoms by the surging mass around us. Yet if I give up all ideality and just struggle through this world, my existence is that of a brute, and I degenerate and degrade myself. Neither way is happiness. Unhappiness is the fate of those who are content to live in this world born as they are. A thousand-fold unhappiness is the fate of those who dare to stand forth for truth and for higher things, and dare to ask for something higher than mere enjoyable, brutal existence here. This is a fact; there is no explanation. There cannot be any explanation, but the Vedanta shows the way out. You must bear in mind that I must tell you facts in this course that will frighten you sometimes, but you must remember what I say, digest it, and think of it, and it will be yours, it will raise us high, and make us capable of understanding and living in truth.

Now this is a statement of facts, not a theory, that this

world is a Tantalus' hell, that we do not know anything about this universe, yet at the same time, we cannot say that we do not know. I cannot say that this chain exists, when I think of it I do not know. It may be an entire delusion in my brain. I may be dreaming all the time. I am dreaming that I am talking to you, and that you are listening to me. No one can prove that it is not. My brain itself may be a dream, and as to that no one ever saw his own brain yet. We all take that for granted. So it is with everything. My own body I take for granted. At the same time I cannot say I do not know. This standing between knowledge and ignorance, this mystic twilight, the mingling of truth and falsehood, where they meet no one knows. We are walking in the midst of a dream, half sleeping, half waking, passing all our lives in a haze, this is the fate of every one of us. This is the fate of all sense knowledge. This is the fate of all philosophy, of all boasted science, of all boasted human knowledge. This is the Universe.

What you call matter, or spirit, or mind, or anything else you may like to call them, any nickname you may choose to give them, the fact remains the same, we cannot say they are; we cannot say they are not. We cannot say they are one, we cannot say they are many. This eternal play of light and darkness, manifold weakness, indiscriminate, indistinguishable, inseparable, yet always there. A fact, yet, at the same time, not a fact, awake, and at the same time, asleep. This is a statement of facts, and this is what is called Mâyâ. We are born in this Mâyâ, we live in it, we think in it, we dream in it. We are philosophers in it, we are spiritual men in it, nay, we are devils in this Mâyâ, and we are gods in this Mâyâ. Stretch your ideas as far as you can, make them higher and higher, call it in-

finite or by any other name you please, even that idea is within this Mâyâ. It cannot be otherwise, and the whole of human knowledge is generalisation of this Mâyâ, trying to know it as it really is. This is the work of Nâma Rupâ—name and form. Everything that has form, everything that calls up an idea in your mind, is within Mâyâ, for, as the German philosophers say, everything that is bound by the laws of time, space, and causation, is within Mâyâ.

Let us go back a little to those ideas of God, and see what became of them. We perceive at once that with such a state of things the idea of some being who is eternally loving us—the word love in our sense—eternally unselfish and almighty, ruling this Universe, cannot be. It requires the boldness of the poet to withstand this idea of the personal God. Where is your just, merciful God? the poet asks. Does He not see millions and millions of His children perish, either in the form of men, or of animals; for who can live one moment here without killing others? Can you draw a breath without destroying thousands of lives? You live because millions die. Every moment of your life, every breath that you breathe, is death to thousands, every movement that you make is death unto millions. Every morsel that you eat is death unto millions. Why should they die? There is an old sophism, "But they are very low existences." Supposing they are; it is a question. Who knows whether the ant is greater than man, or the man than the ant? Who can prove one way or the other? Man can build a house or invent a machine, therefore the man is greater! The same argument will apply, because the ant cannot build a house nor make a machine, therefore he is greater. There is no more reason for one than the other.

Apart from that question, even taking it for granted that these are very low beings, still why should they die?

12

If they are low they ought to live the more. Why not? Because they live more in the senses, they feel pleasure and pain a thousandfold more than you or I can. Which of you can eat a dinner with the same gusto as a dog or a wolf? Because our energies are not in the senses, they are in the intellect, the spirit. But in the dog the whole soul is in the senses, and they become mad, enthusiastic, enjoy things which we human beings can never dream of, and the pain is commensurate with the pleasure.

The same amount of pleasure is meted out as the amount of pain. If the pleasures felt by animals are so much keener than those felt by man, it absolutely follows that the animals' sense of pain is as keen, and a thousandfold keener, than that in men, and they have to die. So the fact is the pain and misery men would feel in dying is intensified a thousandfold in animals, and yet we have to kill them, without troubling about their misery. This is Mâyâ, and if we suppose there is a personal God like a human being, who made all, these so-called explanations and theories, trying to explain that out of evil comes good, are not sufficient. Let twenty thousand good things come, why should they come from evil? On that principle I should cut the throats of others, because I want the full pleasure of my five senses. That is no reason. Why should good come through evil? The question remains to be answered, and it cannot be answered; and philosophy in India was compelled to admit this.

Vedanta is the boldest system of religion. It stopped nowhere, and it had one advantage. There was no body of priests trying to suppress every man who tried to tell the truth. There was always absolute freedom of religion. Their bondage of superstition was society; here society is very free. Social matters in India have not been free,

but religious opinion has. Here a man may dress any way he likes, or eat what he likes—no one says nay, or objects; but if he misses attending his church then Mrs. Grundy is on him. He has to look a thousand times at what society says, and then think of the truth. In India, on the other hand, if a man dines with another who does not belong to his own caste, down comes society with all its terrible powers, and crushes him then and there. If he wants to dress a little differently from the way in which his ancestor dressed ages ago, he is done for. I have heard of a man who was outcasted because he went several miles to see the first railway train. Well, we will presume that was not true? On the other hand, in religion we find Atheists, and Materialists, and Buddhists, and religions, and opinions, and speculations of every phase, the most startling, the most frightening, men going about preaching and getting adherents, and at the very gates of the temple full of all the gods, the Brahmins—to their credit be it said—allowing even the Materialist to stand on the steps of their temples and denounce their gods.

Buddha died at a ripe old age. I remember a friend of mine, a great American scientist, who was fond of reading his life. He did not like the death of Buddha, because he was not crucified. What a false idea! For a man to be great he must be murdered. And such ideas did not prevail in India. This great Buddha was walking up and down denouncing their gods, and even their God, the Governor of the Universe—he said it was all nonsense—and he died at a ripe old age. Eighty-five years he lived, until he had converted half the country.

There were the Charvâkâs, who preached the most horrible things; the most rank, undisguised materialism, such as in the nineteenth century they dare not preach in

the streets. These Charvâkâs were allowed to preach from temple to temple, and city to city, that religion was all nonsense, that it was priestcraft; that the Vedas were the words and writings of fools, rogues and demons, and that there was neither God nor an eternal soul. If there were a soul why did it not come back after death, drawn by love of wife and children? Their idea was that if there was a soul it must still love after death, and want nice things to eat and nice dresses. Yet no one hurt these Charvakas.

Thus India has always had this magnificent idea of religious freedom—for you must always remember that freedom is the first condition of growth. What you don't make free will never grow. The whole of that idea that you can make others grow, and help their growth, and direct and guide them, always retaining yourself the freedom of the teacher, is nonsense, simply a lie, a danger, and it has retarded the growth of millions and millions of human beings in this world. Let men have the light of liberty. That is the only condition of growth.

We, in our country, allowed liberty in spiritual matters, and we have a tremendous spiritual power in religious thought, even to-day. You grant the same liberty in social matters, and so have a splendid social organisation. We have not given any freedom to the expansion of social matters, and ours is a cramped society. You never gave any freedom in religious matters. Fire and sword fell upon that, and the result is that religion is a stunted, degenerated growth in the European mind. In India we have to take off the shackles from society, and in Europe the chains must be taken from the feet of spiritual growth. Then will come a wonderful growth and development of men. If we discover that there is one unity running behind all these developments, either spiritual, moral or

social—they are all the same, and religion must come into society, must come into every day of our lives. It is religion, nothing but religion in the full sense of the word. In the light of Vedanta you will understand that all your sciences are but manifestations of religion, and so is everything that exists in this world.

We see, then, that through this freedom these sciences were built, and there we have two sets of opinions, two sets growing slowly in the teaching of the Vedanta, the one about whom I have just told you were materialists, the denouncers, and the other were positive, not negative. This again is a most curious fact; in every society you find it. Supposing there is an evil in society. You will find immediately one set rise up and begin to denounce it in vindictive fashion. These sometimes degenerate into fanatics. You always find them in every society, and women mostly join in these outcries, because they are impulsive in their nature. Every fanatic who gets up and denounces something gets a following. It is very easy to break; a maniac can break everything he likes, but it would be hard for the maniac to build anything in this world.

So there is this set of denouncers in every country, present in some form or other, and they think they will mend this world by the sheer power of denunciation and exposing of evil; they do some good, according to their light, but much more evil, because things are not done in a day. Social institutions are not made in a day, and to change means removing the cause. Suppose there is evil here; denouncing it will not do anything, but you must go to work at the root. First find out the cause, then remove it, and all the effect will be removed by itself. All this crying will not produce any effect, unless indeed it produces misfortune.

There were others who had sympathy in their hearts and who understood this idea, that we must go deep into the cause, and these are the great saints. One fact you must remember, that all the great teachers of the world have declared that they came not to destroy but to fulfil. Many times this has not been understood, it has been thought to be an unworthy compromise to existing popular opinions. Even now, you hear now and then that these prophets and great teachers were rather cowardly, dared not say and do what they thought was right; but it was not so. Fanatics very little understand the infinite power of love in the hearts of these great sages. They looked upon the inhabitants of this world as their children. They are the real fathers, the real gods, filled with infinite sympathy and patience for everyone, they were ready to bear and forbear. They knew how human society would grow, and patiently, slowly, surely, went on applying their remedies, not by denouncing and not by frightening people, but gently and kindly leading them step by step. These are the writers of the Upanishads. They knew full well how the old ideas of God were not reconcilable with the advanced ethical ideas of the time; they knew perfectly well that truth was not on that side of the question, but on the other side; they knew full well that what the Buddhists and the other Atheists were preaching contained a good deal of truth, nay, great nuggets of truth, but, at the same time, we understand that those men who want to sever the thread that binds the beads, want to build a new society upon the air, will entirely fail.

We never build anew, we simply change places, we cannot have anything new, only change the positions of things. The seed grows into the tree, and patiently

gently, we must direct the energies towards truth, and fulfil the truth that exists, not make new truths. Thus, instead of denouncing these old ideas of God as unfit for modern times, they began to seek out the reality that was in them, and the result was the Vedanta Philosophy, and out of the old deities, and out of the monotheistic God, ruler of the Universe, they found yet higher and higher ideas in what is called the Impersonal Absolute, in finding Oneness throughout the Universe.

He who sees in this world of manifoldness that One running through it all, in this world of death he who finds that One infinite life, and in this world of insentience and ignorance he who finds that One light and knowledge, unto him belongs eternal peace. Unto none else, unto none else.

MAYA AND FREEDOM.

"TRAILING clouds of glory we come," says the poet. Not all of us come trailing clouds of glory though, some of us come also trailing black fogs behind us; no question. But we are sent into this world as into the battlefield to fight, everyone of us. We must come here weeping to fight our way, as well as we can, to make a path through this infinite ocean of life without leaving any track; forward we go long ages behind us, and immense the expanse beyond. So on we go, till death comes, takes us off the field, victorious or defeated, we do not know, and this is Mâyâ.

Hope is dominant in the heart of childhood. The whole is a golden vision to the opening eyes of the child; his will he thinks is supreme. As he moves onward, at every step Nature stands, as an adamantine wall barring his further progress. He may hurl himself against it again and again striving to break through. Through his life the further he goes the further recedes the ideal till death comes, and there is release perhaps, and this is Maya.

A man of science rises, he is thirsting after knowledge. No sacrifice is too great, no struggle too hopeless for him. He moves onward discovering secret after secret of Nature, searching out the secrets from the innermost heart of Nature, and what for? What is all this for? Why should we give him glory? Why should he acquire fame? Does not Nature know infinitely more than any of us human beings, can know, and Nature is dull, insentient. Why should it be glory to imitate the dull, insentient? Nature

can hurl a thunderbolt to any distance and of any magnitude. If a man can do one little bit of it we praise him, laud him up to the skies, and why? Why should we praise him for imitating Nature, imitating death, imitating dullness, imitating insentience?

The force of gravitation can pull to pieces the biggest mass that ever existed; yet it is insentient. What glory is in imitating the insentient? Yet we are all struggling after that, and this is Maya.

The senses drag the human soul out. Man is asking for pleasure, for happiness where it can never be found; for countless ages every one of us is taught that this is futile and vain, there is no happiness here. But we cannot learn; it is impossible for us to learn, except through our own experiences. We must try them, and a blow will come; will we learn then? Not even then. Like moths hurling themselves against the fire we are hurling ourselves again and again on to the senses, to find some pleasure there. We return again and again with freshened energy; thus we go on till crippled, cheated, we die, and this is Mâyâ.

So with our intellect, trying to solve the mysteries of the Universe, we cannot stop the questioning, we must know that there is no knowledge to be gained. A few steps, and there is the wall of beginningless and endless time which we cannot surmount. A few steps and there is a wall of boundless space which cannot be surmounted, and the whole is irrevocably bound in by the walls of cause and effect. We cannot go beyond them. Yet we struggle; we have to struggle; and this is Maya.

With every breath, with every pulsation of the heart, with every one of our movements, we think we are

free, and the very same moment we are shown that we are not. Bound slaves, Nature's bond-slaves, in body, in mind, in all our thoughts, in all our feelings, and this is Maya.

There was never a mother who did not think her child was a born genius, the most extraordinary child that was ever born; she dotes upon her child. Her whole soul is in that child. The child grows up, perhaps becomes a drunkard, a brute, ill-treats the mother, and the more he ill-treats her the more her love increases. The world lauds it as the unselfish love of the mother, little dreaming that the mother is a born slave, she cannot help herself. She would throw it off a thousand times, but cannot. So she covers it with a mass of flowers, calls it wonderful love, and this is Mâyâ.

So are we all in this world, and Nârada said to Krishna, "Lord, show me Mâyâ." A few days passed away, and Krishna asked Nârada to make a trip with him towards a desert, and after walking for several miles Krishna said, "Narada, I am thirsty; can you fetch some water for me?" "Wait awhile, sir, I am going to get you water." So Narada went. At a little distance from the place there was a village; he entered the village in search of some water, and knocked at a door, the door opened and a most beautiful young girl appeared; at the sight of her he immediately forgot that his master was waiting, thirsty, perhaps dying for want of water. He forgot everything, and began to talk with the girl. All that day he did not return to his master. The next day he was again at the house talking to the girl. That talk ripened into love, he asked the father for the daughter, and they were married, and lived there and had children. Thus twelve years passed. His father-in-

law died, he inherited his property, and lived, as he seemed to think, a very happy life with his wife and children, his fields and his cattle, his property and his house, and so forth. Then came a flood. One night the river rose until it overflowed its banks and flooded the whole of the village. Houses began to fall, men and animals were swept away and drowned, and everything was floating in the rush of the stream. Narada had to escape. With one hand he had hold of his wife, with the other two of his children, another child was on his shoulders, and he was trying to ford this tremendous flood.

After a few steps the current was too strong, and the child on his shoulders fell and was borne away. A cry of despair came from Narada. In trying to save that child he lost his grasp upon one of the others he was holding, and it also was lost. At last his wife, to whom he had clung with all his might and main to save her life, was also torn away by the current, and he was thrown on the bank, weeping and wailing, falling upon the ground with bitter lamentations. Behind him there came a gentle tap. "My child, where is the water? You went to fetch a pitcher of water, and I am waiting for you; you have been gone about half an hour." "Half an hour!" Twelve whole years had passed through his mind, and all these scenes have passed by in that half an hour—and this is Maya. In one shape or another we are all in it. It is a most difficult and intricate state of things to understand. What does it show? Something very terrible, which has been preached in every country, taught everywhere and only believed by a few, because until we get the experiences ourselves we cannot believe in it. After all, it is all futile.

Time, the avenger of everything, comes, and nothing is left. He swallows up the sin and the sinner, the king and the peasant, the beautiful and the ugly; he leaves none. Everything is rushing towards that one goal—destruction. Our knowledge, our arts, our sciences, everything is rushing towards that one inevitable goal of all—destruction. None can stem the tide, none can hold it back for a minute. We may try to forget it, just as we hear of persons in a plague-stricken city becoming paralysed, trying to create oblivion with drink and dancing, and other vain attempts. So we are all trying hard to forget it, trying to create oblivion with all sorts of sense pleasures. Yet it does not stop.

Two ways have been proposed. There is one device very common, which everyone knows, and that is, "It may be very true, but do not think of it. 'Make hay while the sun shines,' as the proverb says. It is all right; it is a fact; but do not mind it. Seize the few pleasures you have, do what little you can, do not think of this negative side of the picture, always look towards the hopeful, the positive side." There is some truth in this, but there is a great danger. The truth is that it is a good motive power; hope and a positive ideal are very good motive powers for our lives, but there is a great danger in it too. The danger lies in our giving up the struggle in despair, as is the case with every one who preaches, "Take the world as it is; sit down calmly, as comfortably as you can, and be contented with all these miseries, and when you receive blows, say they are not blows but flowers, and when you are driven about like a slave, say that you are free, just tell lies day and night to others and to your own souls, because that is the only way to live." This is what is called

practical wisdom, and never was it more before the world than in this nineteenth century, because never were blows hitting harder than at the present time, never was competition keener, never were men so cruel to their fellow-men as now, and therefore is this consolation offered. It is the strongest at the present time, and it fails, it always fails. We cannot hide carrion with roses; it is impossible. It would not avail long; one day the roses would vanish, and the carrion would become worse than ever before. So with all our lives; we may try to cover our old and festering sores with cloth of gold, but there will come a day when the cloth of gold is removed, and the sore in all its ugliness is revealed. Is there no hope? True it is that we are all slaves of Mâyâ, we are all born in Mâyâ, we live in Maya.

Is there no way out, no hope? That we are all miserable, that this world is really a prison, that even our so-called trailing beauty is but a prison-house, and that even our intellects and minds are a prison-house, have been known for ages upon ages. There has not been a man, there has not been a human soul, who has not felt it sometime or other, however he may talk. And the old people feel it most, because in them is the accumulated experience of a whole life, because they cannot be easily cheated by the lies of Nature; Maya's lies cannot cheat them much. What of them? Is there no way out? We find that with all this, with this terrible fact before us, in the midst of all this sorrow and suffering, even in this world, where life and death are synonymous, even here, there is a voice that is going through all ages, through all countries, and through every heart. "This my Maya is divine, made up of qualities, and very difficult to cross. Yet those that come

unto me, I cause them to cross this river of life." "Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest." This the voice that is leading us forward. Man has heard it, and is hearing it all through the ages. This voice comes to men when everything seems to be lost, and hope is flying away, when man's dependence on his own strength has been crushed down, and when everything seems to melt away between his fingers, and life is a hopeless ruin. Then he hears it. This is called Religion.

On the one side, therefore, is the bold assertion, the most hopeful assertion, to realise that this is all nonsense, this is Maya, but beyond Maya there is a way out. On the other hand our practical men tell us "Don't you bother your heads about such nonsense as Religion and Metaphysics. Live here; this is a very bad world, indeed, but make the best of it." Which put in plain language means —live a hypocritical, lying life, a life of continuous fraud, covering all sores the best way you can. Go on, patch after patch, until everything is lost, and you are a mass of patchwork. This is what is called practical life. Those that are satisfied with this patchwork will never come to Religion. Religion begins with a tremendous dissatisfaction with the present state of things, with our own lives, a hatred, an intense hatred for this patching up of life, an unbounded disgust for fraud and lies. He alone can be religious who dares stand up and say as the mighty Buddha once said under the Bo-tree, when this idea of practicality appeared also before him and he found it was all nonsense, and yet could not find a way out. And once came the temptation, give up this search, give up the search of truth, go back to the world and live the old life of fraud, calling things by wrong names, telling lies to yourselves

and to everybody—once came the temptation, but he, the saint, conquered it, and he says—"Death is better than a vegetating ignorant life; it is better to die on the battlefield than live a life of defeat." That is the basis of Religion. When a man takes that stand he is in the way to find the truth, he is on the way to God. That determination must be the first impulse towards becoming religious. I will hew out a way for myself. Know the truth, or give up my life in the attempt. For on this side it is nothing, it is gone, it is vanishing every day. The beautiful, hopeful young person of to-day is the veteran of to-morrow. Hopes and joys and pleasures will die like blossoms with to-morrow's frost. That is this side; on the other side there are the great charms of conquest, victorious over all the ills of life, victorious over life itself, becoming conqueror of the Universe. In that way men would stand. Those who dare, therefore, to make the attempt for victory, for truth, for Religion, they are in the right way, and that is what the Vedas preach. "Be not in despair; the way is very difficult; it is, as it were, walking on the blade of a razor. Yet despair not, arise, awake, and find the ideal, the goal."

Now all these various manifestations of Religion, in whatever shape and form they have come to mankind, have this one common central basis. It is the preaching of freedom, the way out of this world. They never came to reconcile the world and Religion, but to cut the Gordian knot, and establish Religion in its own ideal, and not to compromise with the world. That is what every Religion preaches, and the duty of the Vedanta is to harmonise all these aspirations, just as we have seen here a common ground between all the religions of the world, the

highest as well as the lowest. What we call the most arrant superstition and the highest philosophy all come to that common standpoint, that they try to show the way out of this same difficulty and in most of them this way is through the help of some one who is outside this Universe, some one who is not himself bound by the laws of Nature, in one word some one who is free. In spite of all the difficulties and differences of opinion about the nature of the one free agent, whether he is God, whether he is a personal God, whether he is a sentient being like man, whether he is a conscious being, whether masculine, feminine, or neuter, the discussions have been endless, and yet they do not alarm us. In spite of the almost helpless contradictions of the different systems, we find the golden thread of unity running through them all, and in this philosophy, this golden thread has been traced, revealed little by little to our view, and the first step to this revelation is this common ground, that all are approaching towards freedom.

One curious fact is present in the midst of all our sorrows and joys, our difficulties and struggles, we are patiently journeying towards freedom. The question was practically, What is this Universe? From what does it arise? Into what does it go? And the answer was, in freedom it rises, in freedom it rests, and into freedom, in the long run, it melts away. This curious fact you cannot relinquish, your actions, your very lives will be lost without it, this idea, of freedom, that we are free. Every moment we are being proved by Nature to be slaves, and not free. Yet, simultaneously rises the other idea, still I am free. Every step we are knocked down, as it were, by Maya, and shown that we are bound, and yet the same moment, together with this blow, together with this feeling

that we are bound, comes the other feeling that we are free. Something inside us tells us that we are free. But to realise that freedom, to make it manifest, we find the difficulties almost insuperable. Yet, in spite of that, it insists on asserting itself inwardly, "I am free, I am free." And if you study all the various religions of the world you will find this idea expressed. Not only religions—do not take Religion in the narrowest sense—the whole life of society is the assertion of that one principle of freedom. All movements are the assertion of that one freedom. It is, as it were, that that voice has been heard by every one, whether he knows it or not. That voice which declares, "Come to me all ye that are heavy laden." It may not be in the same language, or the same form of speech, but somehow or other that voice calling for freedom has been with us. Yes, we are born here on account of that voice; every one of our movements is for that. We are all rushing towards freedom, we are all following that voice, whether we know it or not: like the flute player who attracted the children of the village, we are all following the music of the flute without knowing it.

Why are we ethical but that we must follow that voice? Not only the human soul, but from the lowest atom to the highest man, all have heard the voice and are rushing to meet it; and in the struggle are combining with each other, pushing each other out of the way, competition, joys, struggles, life, pleasure and death, come, and the whole Universe is nothing but the result of this mad struggle to reach the voice. That is what we are doing. This is the manifestation of Nature.

What happens then? The scene begins to shift. As soon as you know the voice and understand what it is, the whole scene changes. The very world which was the

ghastly battlefield of Maya is changed into something else, into something more beautiful, better. We need not curse Nature, we need not say that the world is horrible, we need not say it is all vain, we need not weep or wail. As soon as you understand the voice you see the reason why this struggle should be here, this fight, this competition, this difficulty, this cruelty, these little pleasures and joys—that they are in the nature of things, because we are going towards the voice, to attain which we are called, whether we know it or not. All human life, therefore, is struggling to manifest this freedom, all Nature, the Sun is moving towards the goal, so is the Earth circling round the Sun, so is the Moon circling round the Earth. For that goal the planet is moving, and the air is blowing. "For that goal the sun is shining and so is the moon, for that goal the wind is blowing and thunder is crashing, for that goal death is stalking about." They are all struggling towards that. The saint is going that way; he cannot help it; it is no glory to him. So is the sinner. The most charitable man is going towards that voice straight, he cannot stop; so is the most hopeless miser going towards the same destination; the greatest worker of good has the same voice in him, he cannot resist it, he must go towards the voice. So is the most arrant idler. One stumbles more than another, and he who stumbles more we call weak, he who stumbles less we call good. Good and bad are never two different things, they are one and the same; the difference is not one of kind, but of degree.

Now, if the manifestation of this power of freedom is really working the whole Universe—applying that to religion, our special study— we find it has been the one assertion throughout. Take the lowest form of religion, where there is a departed ancestor, or some very furious, very

cruel gods, and they are worshipped; what is the very idea of the god or departed ancestor? That he is superior to Nature, not bound by this Maya. Their idea of Nature is very small of course. All the powers they know are repulsion and attraction. The worshipper, an ignorant man of crude ideas cannot pass through a wall of the room, cannot jump up into the skies, or fly through the air, and his idea of Nature consists in all these powers, resistance and non-resistance, and the gods whom he worships can pass through walls, or the air, or change shape. What is meant by that, philosphically? That the assertion of freedom is there, that the gods whom he worships are superior to Nature as he knows it. So with those who worship still higher beings; it is the same assertion. As the view of Nature expands, the view of the soul superior over Nature also expands, and at last we come to what we call Monotheism—there is Mâyâ, this Nature, and there is some one who is superior to the whole of this Mâyâ, and this is the hope.

Here Vedanta begins, where monotheistical ideas first appear. The Vedânta philosophy wants further explanation. This explanation—that there is a soul beyond all these manifestations of Mâyâ, which is superior to, and independent of Mâyâ, and He is attracting us towards Himself, and we are all going towards Him—is very good, says the Vedanta, but yet the perception is not clear, the vision is dim and hazy, although it does not directly contradict reason. Just as in your hymn it is said, "Nearer my God to Thee," the same hymn would be very good to the Vedantin, only he would change a word, and make it "Nearer my God to me." The idea that the goal is far off, away beyond Nature, attracting us all towards it, has to be brought down nearer and nearer, without degrading or degenerating it, until it comes closer and closer,

and the God of Heaven becomes the God in Nature, till the God in Nature becomes the God who is Nature, and the God who is Nature becomes the God within this temple of the body, and the God living in the temple of the body, becomes the temple itself, becomes the soul and man, and there it reaches the last words it can teach; He whom the sages have been seeking in all these places; the voice that you heard was right, says the Vedanta, but the direction you gave to the voice was wrong. That ideal of freedom that you perceived was correct, but you projected it outside yourself, and that was your mistake. Bring it nearer and nearer, until you will find that it was all the time within you, it was the Self of your own self. That freedom was your own nature, and this Maya never bound you. This nature was never powerful over you. Like a frightened child you were dreaming that this Nature was throttling you, and the release from this is the goal; not only to see it intellectually, but to perceive it, actualise it, much more definitely than we perceive this world. Then we shall be free. Then, and then alone, will all difficulties vanish, then all the perplexities of the heart will be smoothed away, all crookedness made straight, then will vanish the delusion of manifoldness, and Nature and Maya, instead of being a horrible, hopeless dream as it is now, will become beautiful, and this earth, instead of becoming a prison-house which it is now, will become your playground, and even dangers and difficulties, even all sufferings, will become deified, as it were, and show us their real nature, that behind everything, as the substance of everything, is He standing there, and He is my own Real Self.

THE REAL AND THE APPARENT MAN.*

GREAT is the tenacity with which man clings to the senses, yet however substantial he may think the external world in which he lives and moves, there come times in the lives of individuals and of races when, involuntarily, they ask, "Is this real?" To the person who never finds a moment to question the credentials of his senses, whose every moment is occupied with some sort of sense-enjoyment—even to him death comes, and he also is compelled to ask: "Is this real?" Religion begins with this question and ends with the answer. Even in the remote past where recorded history cannot help us, in the mysterious light of mythology, back in the dim twilight of civilisation, we find the same question was asked "What becomes of this? What is real?"

One of the most poetical of the Upanishads, the Katha Upanishad, begins with the enquiry: "When a man dies there is a contention. One party declares that he has gone for ever, the other insists that he is still living. Which is true?" Various answers have been given. The whole sphere of Metaphysics, Philosophy and Religion is really filled with various answers to this question. Attempts at the same time have been made to suppress it, to put a stop to this unrest of mind, which asks, "What beyond? What is real?" But so long as death remains all these attempts at suppression will uniformly prove to be unsuccessful. We may very easily talk about seeing nothing beyond and keeping all our hopes and aspirations confined to the

* A lecture delivered in England.

present moment. We may struggle hard, and perhaps everything outside may help to keep us limited within the narrow bounds of the senses. The whole world may combine to prevent us from broadening out beyond the present; yet, so long as there is death the question must come again and again, "Is death the end of everything, of all these things to which we are clinging as if they were the most real of all realities, the most substantial of all substances?" The world vanishes in a moment and is gone. Standing on the brink of a precipice beyond which is the infinite yawning chasm, every mind, however hardened, is bound to recoil, and ask, "Is this real?" The hopes of a lifetime, built little by little with all the energies of a great mind, vanish in one second. Are they real? This question will have to be answered. Time will never lessen its power. As time rolls on it adds value to itself. Then there is the desire to be happy; we run after everything to make ourselves happy, we run after the senses, go on madly careering into the external world. The young man, with whom life is successful, if you ask him, declares that it is real; he thinks it is all quite real. Perhaps the same man, growing old, and with fortune ever eluding him, will declare that it is fate. He finds at last that his desires cannot be fulfilled. Wherever he goes there is an adamantine wall beyond which he cannot pass. Every sense-activity results in a reaction. Everything is evanescent. Enjoyment or misery. Luxury, wealth and power or poverty, even life itself. All is evanescent.

Two positions remain to mankind. One is to believe with the Nihilists that all is nothing. We know nothing. We can never know anything either about the future, the past, or even of the present. For we must remember that he who denies the past, and the future and wants to stick

to the present is simply a madman. One may as well deny the father and mother and assert the child. It would be equally logical. To deny the past and future, the present must inevitably be denied also. This is one position, that of the Nihilists. I have never seen a man who could become a Nihilist for one minute. It is very easy to talk.

Then there is the other position, to seek for an explanation, to seek for the real, to discover in the midst of this eternally changing and evanescent world whatever is real. In this body which is an aggregation of molecules of matter is there anything which is real? And this has been the search throughout the history of the human mind. In the very oldest times we often find glimpses of light coming into men's minds. We find man even then going a step beyond this body finding something which is not this external body, but which although very much like it, is not it, being much more complete, much more perfect, which remains even when this body is dissolved. We read in the hymns of even the Rig Veda addresses to the god of Fire who is burning a dead body, "Carry him, Fire, in your arms gently, give him a perfect body, a bright body, carry him where the fathers live, where there is no more sorrow, where there is no more death." The same idea you will find present in every religion, and we get another idea with it. It is a curious fact that all religions, without one exception hold that man is a degeneration of what he was, whether they clothe this in mythological words, or in the clear language of philosophy, or in the beautiful expessions of poetry. This is the one fact that comes out of every scripture and of every mythology, that the man that is, is a degeneration of what he was. This is the kernel of truth behind the story of Adam's fall in the Jewish scripture. This is again and again repeated in the scriptures of the Hindus; the dream

of a period which they call the age of truth, when no man died unless he wished to die; when he could keep his body as long as he liked and his mind was pure and strong. There was no death at that time, and no evil and no misery; and the present age is a corruption of that state of perfection. Side by side with this we find the story of the deluge everywhere. That story itself is a proof that this present age is held to be a corruption of the former by every religion. It went on becoming more and more corrupt until the deluge swept away a large portion of mankind and again the ascending series began. It is going up slowly again to reach once more that early state of purity. You are all aware of the story of the deluge in the Old Testament. The same story was current among the ancient Babylonians, the Egyptians, the Chinese and the Hindus. Manu, a great ancient sage, was praying on the banks of the Ganges when a little minnow came to him for protection and he put it into a pot of water he had before him. "What do you want?" asked Manu. The little minnow declared he was pursued by a bigger fish and wanted protection. Manu carried the little fish to his home and in the morning it had become as big as the pot, and said, "I cannot live in this pot any longer." Manu put him in a tank, and the next day he was as big as the tank and declared he could not live there any more. So Manu had to take him to a river, and in the morning the fish filled the river. Then Manu put him in the ocean, and he declared, "Manu, I am the Creator of the Universe, I have taken this form to come and warn you that I will deluge the world. You build an ark, and in it put a pair of every kind of animal, and let your family enter the ark and there will come out of the deluge my horn. Fasten the ark to it, and when the deluge subsides come down and people the earth." So the world

was deluged, and Manu saved his own family and a pair of every kind of animal and seeds of every plant, and when it subsided he came and peopled the world and we are all called "man" because we are progeny of Manu.* Now human language is the attempt to express the truth that is within. A little baby, whose language itself consists of imperceptible, indistinct sounds, I am fully persuaded, is attempting to express the highest philosophy, only the baby has not got the organs to express it, not the means. The difference in the language between the highest philosophers and the utterances of babies is one of degree and not of kind. What you call the most correct, systematic, mathematical language of the present time and the hazy, mystical, mythological language of the ancients, differ only in degree. All of them have a grand idea behind, which is, as it were, struggling to express itself, and many times behind these ancient mythologies are nuggets of truth, and many times, I am sorry to say, behind the fine, polished phrases of the modern, is arrant trash. So we need not throw overboard everything because it is clothed in mythology, because it does not fit in with the notions of Mr. So and-So, or Mrs. So-and-So of modern times. If they laugh at religion because most religions declared that men must believe these things, because such and such a prophet has said them, they ought to laugh more at these moderns. In modern times if a man quotes a Moses, or a Buddha, or a Christ, he is laughed at; but let him give the name of a Huxely, a Tyndall, or a Darwin, and it is swallowed without salt. "Huxley has said it," that is enough for many. We are free from superstitions indeed; that was a religious superstition, and this is a scientific superstition; only in and through that superstition came life-giving

* Sanskrit root *man* to think.

lines of spirituality; in and through this modern superstition come lust and greed. That superstition was worship of God, and this superstition is worship of filthy lucre, of fame or power. That is the difference.

To turn back to our mythology, behind all these stories we find one idea standing supreme—that man is a degeneration of what he was. Coming to the present times, modern research seems to repudiate this position absolutely. Evolutionists seem to entirely contradict this assertion. According to them man is the evolution of the mollusc, and therefore what this mythology states cannot be true. There is in India, however, a mythology which is able to reconcile both these positions. The Indian mythology has a theory of cycles, that all progression is in the form of waves. Every wave is attended by a fall, and that by a rise the next moment, that by a fall in the next, and again another rise. The motion is in cycles. Certainly it is true even on the grounds of modern research, that man cannot be simply an evolution. Every evolution presupposes an involution. The modern scientific man will tell you that you can only get the amount of energy out of a machine which you put into it before. Something cannot be produced out of nothing. If man is an evolution of the mollusc, the perfect man, the Buddha man, the Christ man, then the mollusc was the involved Buddha. If it is not so, whence come these gigantic personalities? Something cannot come out of nothing. Thus we are in the position of reconciling the scriptures with modern light. That energy which manifests itself slowly through various stages until it becomes the perfect man cannot come out of nothing. It existed somewhere, and if the mollusc, or the protoplasm, is the first point to which you can trace it, that protoplasm, somehow or other, must have contained

the energy. There is a great modern discussion going on as to whether this aggregate of materials we call the body is the cause of manifestation of the force we call the soul and thought, etc., or whether it is the thought that manifests this body. The religions of the world, of course, hold that the force called thought manifests the body, and not the reverse. There are schools of modern people who hold that what we call thought is simply the outcome of the adjustment of the parts of the machine which we call body. Taking the second position, that the soul of the mass of the thought, or however you may call it, is the outcome of this machine, the outcome of the chemical and physical combinations of matter making up the body and brain, the question remains unanswered. What makes the body? What force combines all these molecules into the body form? What force is there which takes up from the mass of matter around and forms my body one way, another body another way, and so on? What makes these infinite distinctions? To say that the force called soul is the outcome of the combinations of the molecules of the body is putting the cart before the horse. How did the combinations come: where was the force to make them? If you say some other force was the cause of these combinations and that soul was the outcome of that matter, and that soul,—which combined a certain mass of matter,—was itself the result of the combinations, it is no answer. That theory ought to be taken which explains most of the facts, if not all, and without contradicting other existing theories. The force which takes up the matter and forms the body is the same which manifests through that body, and this is more logical. To say therefore that the thought-forces manifested by the

body are the outcome of the arrangement of molecules and have no existence at all, has no meaning, neither can force evolve out of matter. It is rather more possible to demonstrate that what we call matter does not exist at all. It is only a certain state of force. Solidity, hardness, or anything, can be proved to be the result of motion. Increase of vibration will make things solid. A mass of air vibrated at a tremendous rate would become as solid as a table. A thread of a spider's web moved at almost infinite velocity would be as strong as an iron chain, would cut through an oak tree, such force would be given to it by motion. Looking at it that way it would be rather easier to prove that what we call matter and so on does not exist. But the other way cannot be proved.

What is this force which is manifesting itself through the body? It is obvious to all of us, whatever that force be, that it is taking particles up, as it were, and manipulating forms out of them—the human body. None else come here to manipulate bodies for you and me. I never saw anybody eat food for me. I have to assimilate it, manufacture blood and bones and everything out of that food. What is this mysterious force? Ideas about the future and about the past seem to be terrifying to man. To many they seem to be mere speculation. We will take the present theme. What is the force now which is working through us? We have seen how in old times in all the ancient scriptures this power, this manifestation of power, was thought to be a bright substance having a body like this body, and which remains even after this body falls. Later on, however, we find a higher idea coming even—that this body does not represent the force. Whatsoever has form must be the result of combinations of particles and requires something else behind it to move it. If this body requires

something which is not the body to manipulate it, the bright body, by the same necessity, will also require something other than itself to manipulate it. So that something was called the soul, the Atman in Sanskrit. It was the Atman which through the bright body, as it were, worked on the gross body outside. The bright body is considered as the receptacle of the mind, and the Atman is beyond that. It is not the mind even, it works the mind, and through the mind the body. You have an Atman, I have another, each one of us has a separate Atman, and a separate fine body, and through that we work on the gross external body. Questions were then asked about this Atman, about its nature. What is this Atman, this soul of man which is neither a body nor a mind? Great discussions followed. Speculations came, various shades of philosophic enquiry came into existence, and I will try to place before you some of the conclusions that have been reached about this Atman. The different philosophies seem to agree that this Atman, whatever it be, has neither form nor shape, and that which has neither form nor shape must be omnipresent. Time begins with mind, space also is in the mind. Causation cannot stand without time. Without the idea of succession there cannot be any idea of causation. Time, space, and causation therefore, are in the mind, and as this Atman is beyond the mind and formless it must be beyond time, beyond space, and beyond causation. Now if it is beyond time, space and causation, it must be infinite. Then comes the highest speculation in our philosophy. The infinite cannot be two. If the soul be infinite there can be only one soul, and all these ideas of various souls—you having one soul, and I having another, and so forth—are not real. The real man therefore is one and infinite, the omnipresent spirit. And the apparent man is only a limitation of that real man. In

that sense all these mythologies are true, that the apparent man, however great he may be, is only a dim reflection of the real man which is beyond. The real man, the spirit, being beyond cause and effect, not bound by time and space, must therefore be free. He was never bound, and could not be bound. The apparent man, the reflection is limited by time, space and causation, and he is therefore bound. Or in the language of some of our philosophers, he appears to be bound, but really is not. This is the reality in our souls, this omnipresence, this spiritual nature, this infinity, which we are already. Every soul is infinite, therefore there is no question of birth and death. Some children were being examined. The examiner put them rather hard questions and among them was this question: "Why does not the earth fall?" He wanted to evoke answers about gravitation and so forth. Most of the children could not answer at all; a few answered that it was gravitation or something. One bright little girl answered it by putting another question: "Where should it fall?" Because the question is nonsense. Where should the earth fall? There is no falling or rising for the earth. In infinite space there is no up or down; that is only in the relative. Where is the going or coming for the infinite? Whence should it come and whither should it go? When people refuse to think of the past, or future, or what is going to become of them—when they give up the idea of body, because, being limited, the body comes and goes—then they have risen to a higher ideal. The body is not the real man, neither is the mind, for the mind waxes and wanes. It is the spirit beyond which alone can live for ever. The body and mind are continually changing. These are the names of series of changeful phenomena, rivers where every particle of water is in a constant state

of flux; yet we recognize the series as the same river. Every particle in this body is continually changing; no one has the same body for several minutes together. Yet a sort of impression left in the mind makes us call it the same. So with the mind, one moment happy another moment unhappy; one moment strong, another weak. An ever-changing whirlpool. That cannot be the spirit, it is infinite. Change can only be in the limited. To say that the infinite changes in any way is absurd; it cannot be. You can move and I can move as bodies; every particle in this universe is in a constant state of flux, but taking the universe as a unit, as one whole, it cannot move, it cannot change. Motion is always a relative thing. I move in relation to a table, in relation to something else. Any particle in this universe can change in relation to any other particle, but the whole universe as one—in relation to what will that move? There is nothing beside it. So this infinite unit is unchangeable, immovable, absolute, and this is the Real one. Our reality, therefore, consists in the Universal, and not in the limited. These are old delusions, however comfortable they are, to think that we are little limited beings, constantly changing. People are frightened when they are told that they are Universal Being, everywhere present. Through every thing you work, through every foot you move, through every lip you talk, throug every heart you breathe. People are frightened when they are told this. They will again and again tell you that you are not going to lose your individuality. What is any man's individuality? I should be glad to see it.

A little baby has no moustache; when he grows older he has a moustache and beard. His individuality is lost if it is in the body. If I lose one eye, or if I lose one of my hands my individuality will be lost if it is in the body. A

drunkard should not give up drinking because he would lose his individuality. A thief need not be a good man because he would therefore lose his individuality. No man ought to change his habits for fear of this. There is no individuality except in the Infinite. That is the only condition which does not change. Everything else is in a constant state of flux. Neither can individuality be in memory. Suppose I receive a blow on the head and forget all about my past; then I have lost all my individuality; I am gone. I do not remember two or three years of my childhood, and if memory and existence are one, then whatever I forget is gone. That part of my life which I do not remember I did not live. That is a very narrow idea of individuality. We are not individuals yet. We are struggling towards individuality and that is the infinite; that is the real nature of man. He alone lives whose life is in the whole universe, and the more we concentrate our lives on little limited things as bodies, we are going towards death. That moment alone we have lived when our lives were in the universe, in others; and all those minutes which we concentrated upon this little life was death, simply death, and that is why the fear of death comes. The fear of death can only be conquered when man realizes that so long as there is one life in this universe he is living. "I am in every thing, in every body; I am in all lives. I am the universe, this whole universe is my body. How can I die so long as one particle remains? Who says I will die?" Then such a man becomes fearless, then alone comes the state of fearlessness. To talk of immortality in little constantly changing things is ridiculous. Says an old Sanskrit philosopher: It is only the spirit that is the individual because it is infinite; no infinity can be divided; infinity cannot be broken into pieces. It is the

same one undivided unit for ever, and this is the individual man, the real man. The apparent man is merely a struggle to express, to manifest this individuality, which is beyond, and that evolution is not in the spirit. These changes which are going on, the wicked becoming good, the animal becoming man, take it whatever way you like, are not in the spirit. Evolution of nature and manifestation of spirit. Suppose here is a screen hiding you from me, and there is a small hole in the screen, and through that I can just see some of the faces before me, just a few faces. Now suppose this hole begins to grow larger and larger. As the hole goes on becoming larger and larger, more and more of the scene before me reveals itself, and when the hole has become identified with the screen, I stand face to face with you. You did not change at all in this case, you were where you always were. It was the hole that was evolving and you were manifesting yourself. So it is with the spirit. You are already free and perfect. No perfection is going to be attained. You are that already—free and perfect. What are all these ideas of religion and God and searching for the hereafter? Why does man go to look for a God? Why in every nation, in every state of society did man want a perfect ideal somewhere, either in man, in God, or anywhere else? Because that idea is in you. It is your own heart beating and you did not know, you were mistaking it for something external. It is the God within your own self that is propelling you to seek for it, to realise it, and after long search here and there, in temples and in churches, in earths, in heavens, and in all various ways, at last we come back, complete the circle from where we started, back, to our own soul and find that He for whom we have been seeking all over the world, for whom we have been weeping and praying in churches and

temples, on whom we were looking as the mystery of all mysteries shrouded behind the clouds, He is nearest of the near, my own Self, the reality of my own life, my body and my soul—I am Thee and Thou art me. That is your own nature. Assert it, manifest it. Not to become pure, you are pure already. You are not to be perfect, you are that already. This whole of nature is like that screen which is hiding the reality beyond. Every good thought that you think or act upon is simply tearing the veil, as it were, and the purity, the Infinity, the God behind, manifests itself. This is the whole history of man. Finer and finer becomes the veil, more and more of the light behind shines by its own nature, for it is its nature to shine. It cannot be known; in vain we try to know it. Were it knowable, it would not be what it is, for it is the eternal subject: knowledge is a limitation. Knowledge is objectifying. He is the eternal subject of everything, the eternal witness in this universe, your own Self. Knowledge is, as it were, a lower step, a degeneration. We are It already; how to know It? Every man is It and is struggling to express It in various ways; else why are there so many ethical codes? Where is the explanation of all ethics? One idea stands out as the centre in all ethics, expressed in various forms; doing good to others. The guiding motive of mankind is charity towards men, charity towards all animals. But these are all various expressions of that eternal truth that "I am the universe; this universe is one." Else where is the reason? Why should I do good to my fellowmen? Why should I do good to others? What compels me? It is this feeling, this sympathy, of the sameness everywhere. The hardest hearts feel sympathy to other beings sometimes. Even the man who gets frightened if he is told that this assumed individuality is a delusion really, that it is ignoble to try to cling

to this apparent individuality, that very man will tell you that extreme self-abnegation is the centre of all morality; and what is perfect self-abnegation? What remains? Self-abnegation means the abnegation of this apparent self, the abnegation of all selfishness. This idea of "me" and "mine"—*ahankara* and *mama*—is the result of past superstition, and the more this present self rolls away, the more the Real Self becomes manifest in its full glory. This is real self-abnegation, the centre, the basis, the gist of all moral teaching, and whether men know it or not, the whole world is slowly going towards that, practising that more or less. Only the vast majority of mankind do it unconsciously. Let them do it consciously. Let them make the sacrifice knowing that this is not the real self; this is nothing but limitation. One glimpse of that infinite reality which is behind, one spark of that infinite fire that is the All, represents the present man, but that Infinite is his true nature.

What is the utility, the effect, the result of this knowledge? In these days we have to measure everything by utility. That is to say generally, by how many pounds, shillings and pence it represents. What right has a person to ask that truth should be judged by the standard of utility or money? Suppose there is no utility, will it be less truth? Utility is not the test of truth. Nevertheless, there is the highest utility in this. Happiness, we see, is what everyone is seeking for; but the majority seek it in things which are evanescent, and which are not real. No happiness was ever found in the senses. There never was a person who found happiness in the senses, or in enjoyments of the senses. Happiness is only found in the spirit. Therefore the highest utility to mankind is to find this happiness in the spirit. The next point is, that ignorance

is the great mother of all misery, and this is the fundamental ignorance, to think that the Infinite weeps and cries, that He is finite, and this is the basis of all ignorance, this we, the immortal, the ever pure, the perfect spirit, think that we are little minds, that we are little bodies; this is the mother of all selfishness. As soon as I am a little body I want to preserve it, to protect it, to keep it nice, at the expense of other bodies; you and I have become separate. As soon as this idea of separation comes, it opens the door to all mischief and leads to all misery. This is the utility, that if a very small fractional part of the human beings living to-day can put aside this idea of selfishness and narrowness and littleness, this earth will become a paradise to-morrow, but with machines and improvements of material knowledge it will never come. It only increases misery, as oil poured on fire increases the flame all the more. Without the knowledge of spirit, every bit of material knowledge is only adding fuel to fire, only giving into the hands of selfish man one more instrument to take what belongs to others, to live upon the life of others, instead of giving up one's life for others.

Is it practical? is another question. Can it be practised in modern society? *Truth does not pay homage to any society, modern or ancient. Society has to pay homage to truth, or die.* Societies and all beings are moulded upon truth, and truth has not to adjust itself to society. If such noble truth as unselfishness cannot be practised in society, better give up society and go into forests. That is the daring man. There are two sorts of courage. The courage to jump at the mouth of a cannon. Tigers, in that case, have been better than men and wolves also. But there is another sort of spiritual boldness. An invading emperor went to India. His teacher told him to go and

see some of those sages of India. After a long search he found a very old man sitting on a block of stone. The Emperor talked with him a little and became very much pleased with the conversation of the man. He asked the sage to go with him to his country. "No, I am quite satisfied with my forest here." Said the Emperor, "I will give you money, position, wealth. I am the Emperor of the world." "No," replied the man, "I don't care for those things." The Emperor replied, "If you do not go I will kill you." The man burst into a laugh. "That is the silliest thing you ever said, Emperor. You cannot kill me. Me the sun cannot dry, neither fire can burn, neither instrument kill for I am the birthless, the deathless, the omnipotent, omnipresent spirit, ever living." That is another boldness. In the Mutiny of 1857 there was a great Swami, a very great soul. A Mahommedan mutineer stabbed him and nearly killed him. The Hindu mutineers brought the Mahommedan to the Swami and offered to kill him. But the Swami turned and said; "Yet brother, thou art He, thou art He!" and expired. That is another bravery. What is it to talk of the bravery of your muscles, of your Western institutions, if you cannot make a truth square with your society, if you cannot build up a society into which the highest truth will fit? What is this boastful talk about your grandeur and greatness, if you, above all things, stand up and say, "This is not practical." Is nothing practical, but pounds, shillings, and pence? If so, why the boast of your society? *That society is the greatest where the highest truths become practical.* That is my opinion, and if society is not fit for the highest truths, make it. Make it if you can, and the sooner you do so, the better. Stand up, men and women, in the spirit, dare to believe in the truth, dare to practise the truth. The

world requires a few hundred bold men and women. It is very hard to be bold. That animal boldness, the tigers can do better. Wolves have it naturally. Even the ants are better than all other animals. What use to talk of this physical boldness! Practise that boldness which does not quake before death, which welcomes death, which stands there and knows it is the spirit and in the whole universe, no arms can kill it, not all the thunders can kill it. Not all the fire in the universe can burn it. Which dares know the truth, and shows the truth in life. This is the free man, this is the real soul. And it is practised in this society, and in every society. "This Atman is first to be heard, then thought about, and then meditated upon."

There is a great tendency in modern times to talk too much of works and decry all thought. Doing is very good, but even that comes from thinking. Little manifestations of energy which have originated in thought are escaping through the muscles and are called work. Where there is no thought, there will be no work. Fill the brain, therefore, with high thoughts, highest ideals, place them day and night before you, and out of that will come great work. Talk not about impurity, but tell the mind we are pure. We have hypnotised ourselves into this thought that we are little, that we are born and that we are going to die, and into living in a constant state of fear.

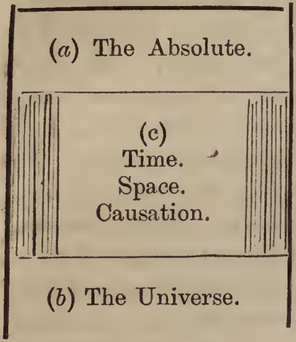
There was a lioness, heavy with young, going about in search of prey, and there was a flock of sheep, and the lioness jumped upon the flock. She died in the attempt and a little baby lion was born, motherless. It was taken care of by the sheep and the sheep brought it up and it grew with the sheep, lived on grass like the sheep, bleated like the sheep, and although it became a big full-grown lion, to all intents and purposes it thought it was a sheep. In

course of time another big lion came in search of prey, and what was its astonishment to find that in the midst of this flock was this lion flying like the sheep at the approach of danger. He tried to get near to teach it that it was not a sheep, but a lion, yet at the every approach of the other lion the sheep fled, and with it the sheep-lion. But the other lion was rather kind, he watched, and one day found the big sheep-lion sleeping. He jumped on it and said, "You are a lion." "I am a sheep," cried the other lion. He would not believe, but bleated. The lion dragged him towards a lake and said, "Look there, there is my reflection and yours." Then came the comparison. He looked at this lion and then at his own reflection, and in a moment came the idea that he was a lion. The lion roared, the bleating was gone. You are lions, you are souls, pure, infinite and perfect. The might of the universe is in you. "Why weepest thou, my friend? There is neither birth nor death for thee. Why weepest thou? There is no disease nor misery for thee, but thou art like the infinite sky, clouds of various colours come over it, play for a moment, then vanish. It is the same eternal blue." This is the practice. Why do we see wickedness? There was a stump of a tree in the dark at night. A thief came that way and said, "That is a policeman." A young man waiting for his beloved came that way and thought that was his sweetheart. A child who had been told ghost stories came out and began to shriek that it was a ghost. But it was a stump of a tree. We see the world as we are. Put on the table a bag of gold and let a baby be there. Let a thief come and take the gold. Would the baby know it was stolen? That which we have inside we see outside. The baby has no thief inside

and sees no thief outside. So with all knowledge. Do not talk of the wickedness of the world and all its sins. Weep that you are bound to see wickedness yet. Weep that you are bound to see sin everywhere, and if you want to help the world do not condemn it. Do not weaken it all the more. For what is sin and what is misery, and what are all these, but the results of weakness? The world has been made weaker and weaker every day by such teachings. Men are taught from childhood that they are weak and are sinners. Teach them that they are all glorious children of immortality, even those who are the weakest in manifestation. Let positive, strong, helpful thought, enter into their brains from very childhood and not weakening and paralysing thought. Lay yourselves open to those thoughts. Tell your own minds "I am He, I am He." Let it ring day and night in your minds like a song and at the point of death declare: "I am He." That is the truth, the infinite strength of the world is yours. Drive out the superstition that has covered your minds. Let us be brave. Know the truth and practise the truth. The goal may be distant, but awake, arise, and stop not till that goal is reached.

THE ABSOLUTE AND MANIFESTATION.

THE one question that is most difficult to grasp in understanding the Advaita Philosophy, and the one question that will be asked again and again and will always remain after thinking of it all your life, is how has the Infinite, the Absolute, become the finite. I will take up this question, and, in order to illustrate it better, I will use a figure.



Here is the Absolute (*a*), and this is the Universe (*b*). The Absolute has become the Universe. By this is not only meant the material world, but the mental world, the spiritual world—everything, heavens and earths, and everything that exists. Mind is the name of a change, and body the name of another change, and so on, and all these compose one universe. This Absolute (*a*) has become the Universe (*b*) by coming through time, space, and causation (*c*). This is the central idea of Advaita. Time, space, and causation are like the glass through which the Absolute is seen, and when it is seen on the lower side it appears as the Universe. Now we at once see from this, that where the Absolute is, there is neither time, space nor causation. The idea of time cannot be there, seeing that there is no mind, no thought. The idea of space cannot be there, seeing that

there is no external change. What you call motion and causation cannot exist where there is only one. We have to understand this, and impress it on our minds, that what we call causation begins after, if we may be permitted to say so, the degeneration of the Absolute into the phenomenal, and not before, that our will, our desire, and all these things always come after that. I always thought Schopenhauer's philosophy makes a mistake in understanding the Vedanta, for it wants to make this Will everything. Schopenhauer makes this Will stand in the place of the Absolute. But the Absolute cannot be represented as Will, for Will is something changeable and phenomenal, and above the line (*c*) written above time, space and causation, there is no change, no motion; it is only below the line that motion, or internal motion called thought, begins. So there can be no Will on the other side, and Will, therefore, cannot be the cause of this universe. Coming nearer, we see in our own bodies that Will is not the cause of every movement. I move this chair; Will was the cause of that movement, and that Will became manifested as muscular motion at the other end. That was all right. But the same power that moves the chair is moving the heart, the lungs, and so on, but not through Will. Given that the power is the same, it becomes Will when it rises on to the plane of consciousness, and to call it Will before it has risen to this plane will be a misnomer. That makes a good deal of confusion in Schopenhauer's philosophy. There is a Sanskrit word called *prajna* and another called *samvit*. They are the best words to be used in this connection, because they include all the states of the mind; they are the common name for the states of the mind. Everything is expressed by them. I do not know an equivalent for them in English. They are neither consciousness, nor the state

before consciousness, but a sort of essence of change. Thus we see why we ask this question. A stone falls and we ask why. This question is possible on the supposition that everything that happens, every motion, has been preceded by something else. I request you to make it very clear in your minds, for, whenever we ask why anything happens, we are standing on the supposition that everything that happens must have a why, that is to say, must have been preceded by something else. This precedence and succeedence are what we call the law of causation, that everything that we can see, or feel, or hear, around us, everything in the Universe, is by turn a cause and effect. It is the cause of certain other things that come after it, and it itself, is the effect of something which has preceded it. This is called the law of causation, and this is our settled belief. We believe that every particle in the Universe is in relation to everything else, whatever it be. It has been a great discussion how this idea came. In Europe there have been intuitive philosophers who believed it was constitutional in humanity, others have believed it came from experience, but it has never been settled. We will see what Vedanta makes of this solution later on. So first we have to understand this, that the very asking of the question "why" stands on the supposition that everything round us has been preceded by certain things, and will be succeeded by certain other things. The other belief involved in this question is that nothing in the Universe is independent, everything can be acted upon by something outside itself. It is inter-dependence in the whole Universe. In saying, "What caused the Absolute?" what error are we making? We are standing on the same supposition there. To ask this question we have to suppose that the Absolute also is dependent on something

else, and that the Absolute also is bound by something else. That is to say, that in so using the word Absolute we drag the Absolute down to the level of the Universe. For, above that line there is neither time, space nor causation, because it is One, beyond mind. That which exists by itself alone, the One, cannot have any cause. That which is free cannot have any cause; else it would not be free, but bound. That which has relativity cannot be free. So the very question, you see, why the Infinite became the finite, is a mistake, it is self-contradiction. Coming from subtleties to the logic of our common plane, to common-sense, we can see this from another side, when we want to know how the Absolute has became the relative. Supposing we know the answer, would the Absolute remain the Absolute? It would have become the relative. What is meant by knowledge in our common-sense idea? Anything that becomes limited by our mind, that we know, and when it is beyond our mind we do not know it. Now, if the Absolute becomes limited by the mind, it is no more Absolute; it has become finite. Everything limited by the mind becomes finite. Therefore, to know the Absolute is again a condradiction in terms. This is why this question has never been answered, because if it were answered, it would no more be Absolute; a God known is no more God; He has become finite like one of us, like the chair. He cannot be known, He is always the Unknowable One. But what Advaita says is that it is more than knowable. This is one fact to learn. You must not go home with the idea that God is unknowable in the sense in which Agnostics put it. For instance, here is a chair and my knowledge of it is expressed by the English word—it is known to me. On the contrary, what is beyond ether, or whether some people exist there or not, possibly

is unknowable. But God is neither known nor unknowable in this sense. It is something still higher than known, that is what is meant by God being unknown and unknowable, not in the sense in which some people say some questions are unknowable or unknown. It is more than known. This chair is known ; it is a certain degree of that knowledge ; but God is intensely more than that, because in and through Him we have to know this chair itself. He is the witness, the eternal witness of all knowledge. Whatever we know we have to know in and through Him. He is the essence of our own Self. He, the I, is the essence of this ego ; we cannot know anything excepting in and through that I, and you have to know everything in and through the Brahman. To know the chair, therefore, you have to know it in and through God. Thus God is infinitely nearer to us than the chair, but yet He is something higher. Neither known, nor unknown, but something infinitely higher than either. He is your Self. Who would live a second, who would breathe a second in this Universe if that Blessed One were not filling it, because in and through Him we breathe, in and through Him we exist ? Not that He is standing somewhere and making my blood circulate. What is meant is that He is the essence of all this, the Soul of my soul. You cannot by any possibility say you know Him : it would be too much of a degradation. You cannot jump out of yourself, so you cannot know Him. Knowledge is objectification. For instance, in memory you are objectifying many things, projecting them out of yourself. All memory, all things I have seen and which I know are in my mind. The pictures or impressions of all these things, as it were, are in my mind, and when I would try to think of them, to know them, the first act of knowledge would be projecting them outside.

This cannot be done with God, because He is the essence of our souls; we cannot throw Him out. It is said to be the holiest word in the Vedanta.

Saya eshonima aitadatmyam idamsarvam tatsatyam sa-atma tattvamasi svetaketo.

"He that is the essence of your soul, He is the truth, He is the Self, Thou that art, O Svetaketu." This is what is meant by "Thou art God." You cannot describe Him by any other language. All attempts of language, calling Him father, or brother, or our dearest friend, are attempts to objectify God, which cannot be. He is the Eternal subject of everything. I am the subject of this chair; I see the chair; so God is the Eternal subject of my soul. How can you objectify Him, the essence of your souls, the Reality of everything? Thus, I would repeat to you once more, God is neither knowable nor unknowable, but something infinitely higher than these, one with us, and that which is One is neither knowable, nor unknowable, just as my own self, or your own self. You cannot know your own self, you cannot move it out, and make it an object to look at, because you *are* that, and cannot separate yourself from it. Neither is it unknowable, because you cannot objectify yourself, and, therefore, you cannot say it is unknowable; for what is more known than yourself? It is really the centre of our knowledge in exactly the same sense that God is neither unknowable nor known, but infinitely higher than that, your self.

Thus we see, that, first, the question is a condradiction in terms, and secondly, we find that the idea of God in the Advaita is this Oneness, and, therefore, we cannot objectify Him, for we are always living and moving in Him, whether we know it or not does not matter. Whatever we do, is always through Him. Now the

question is what is this time, space and causation. The Advaita means non-duality; there are no two, but one. Now we see that here is a proposition that the Absolute is manifesting itself as many through the veil of time, space and causation. Therefore, it seems that there are two, this Absolute, and *Maya* (the sum-total of time, space and causation). It seems apparently a very convincing answer that there are two. To which the Advaitist replies that it cannot be called two. To have two we must have two independent existences, just as that of the Absolute which cannot be caused. In the first place, this time, space and causation cannot be said to be an independent existence. Time is entirely a dependent existence; it changes with every change of our mind. Sometimes in a dream one imagines that he has lived several years; at other times several months were passed as one second. So that time has entire dependence on the state you are in. Secondly, the idea of time vanishes altogether sometimes, and comes at others. So with space, we cannot know what space is. Yet it is there, indefinable, and cannot live separate from anything else. So with causation. One peculiar attribute we find in all this time, space and causation, is that they cannot live separate from other things. Try to think of space which has neither colour, nor limits, nor any connection with the things around, just abstract space. You cannot think of it; you have to think of it as the space between two limits, or between three objects. It has to cling on to some object to have its existence. So with time; you cannot have any idea of abstract time, but you have to take two events, one preceding, and the other succeeding, and join the two events by the idea of time. Time depends on two events, just as space is always clinging on to two objects outside. And

the idea of causation is clinging on to all these, time, space and everything. This is one peculiar thing about them, that they have no independent existence. They have not even the existence which the chair or the wall has. It is a shadow round everything, but you cannot catch it. It has no real existence; we see it has not. At most a shadow, nor is it non-existence, seeing that through it all these things are manifesting as this Universe, an inborn composition of three qualities producing progeny of various forms. So we see first that this combination of time, space and causation, has neither existence nor non-existence. It is like a shadow which comes round things. Secondly, it vanishes. To give an illustration, there is a wave on the sea. The wave is the same as the ocean, certainly, and yet we know it is a wave, and different from the ocean. What makes this difference? The form and the name, the idea in the mind and the form. Now can we think of a wave form as anything separate from the ocean? Certainly not. It always clings on to the ocean idea. If the wave subsides, the form vanishes in a moment, and yet the form was not a delusion. So long as the wave existed the form was there, and you were bound to see the form. This is *Maya*. The whole of this Universe, therefore, is, as it were, a peculiar form, the Absolute is that ocean, and you and I, and suns, and stars, and everything are various waves in that ocean. And what makes the waves different? Only that form, and that form is just time, space and causation, all entirely dependent on the wave. As soon as you take away the wave, they vanish. As soon as the individual gives up this *Maya*, it vanishes for him, and he becomes free. The whole struggle is to get rid of this clinging on to time, space and causation. It is always throwing obstacles in our way, and we are trying to get

free. What do they call the theory of evolution? What are the two factors? There is a tremendous potential power which is trying to express itself, and circumstances are holding it down, the environments will not allow it to express itself. So, in order to fight with these environments, the power is getting newer and newer bodies. A little amœba, in the struggle, gets another body and conquers some obstacles, so gets other bodies until it becomes man. Now, if you carry that logic to its conclusion, there must come a time when that power that was in the amœba and came out to man will have conquered all the obstructions that nature can bring before it, and will have got out of its environments. This idea brought into metaphysics would be expressed thus, that there are two components of every action, the one the subject and the other the object. For instance, I feel unhappy because a man scolds me. These are the two parts, and what is my struggle all my life? To make myself strong so as to conquer that environment, so that he may scold and I shall not feel. That is how we are trying to conquer. What is meant by morality? Making the subject strong, inuring itself, just as your science says that the human body becomes in time inured to the Absolute, and it is a logical conclusion of our philosophy, if this is true, that there must come a time when we have conquered all the environments, because Nature is finite.

That is another thing to learn. How do you know that Nature is finite? You can only know this through metaphysics. Nature is that Infinite under limitations. Therefore it is finite. So there must come a time when we have conquered all environments. And how are we to conquer them? We cannot possibly conquer *all* the objective environments. No. The little fish wants to fly from

its enemies which are in the water. How does it conquer? By flying up into the air, becoming a bird. The fish did not change the water, or the air; the change was in itself. Change is always in the subjective. So on all through evolution you find that conquest of Nature comes by change in the subjective. Apply this to religion, and morality, and you will find that the conquest of evil comes by the change in the subjective also. That is how the Advaita system gets its whole force, on the subjective side of man. To talk of evil and misery is nonsense, because they do not exist outside. If I am inured against all anger, I never feel anger. If I am proof against all hatred, I never feel hatred, because it will not touch me. This is, therefore, the process to get that conquest, through the subjective, by perfecting the subjective. Therefore, you find one more thing that the only religion, I may make bold to say, which agrees with, and even goes a little further than modern researches, both on physical and moral lines, is the Advaita, and that is why it appeals to the modern scientist so much. They find that the old dualistic theories are not enough for them, do not satisfy their necessities. But this Advaita satisfies their intellectual necessities. A man must not only have faith, but intellectual faith too. To make a man take up everything and believe it would make him a lunatic. I once had a book sent me which said I must believe everything. It said there was no soul, or anything, but there were gods and goddesses in heaven, and a thread of light going from each of our heads to heaven. How the writer did know all these things? She had been inspired, and wanted me to believe it too, and because I refused, she said, "You must be a very bad man; there is no hope for you." Now, in this latter part of the 19th century,

such ideas as that religion coming from any other source except one's own forefather's religion must be false, show a little weakness left yet, and it will have to go. I do not mean that it is alone in this country, but in every country, and nowhere more than in my own, where it is terrible. This Advaita was never allowed to come to the people. At first some monks got hold of it, and took it to the forests, and so it came to be called the Forest Philosophy, when, by the mercy of the Lord, the Buddha came, and preached it to the masses, and the whole nation arose to Buddhism. Long after that, when Atheists and Agnostics had destroyed the nation again, the old preachers found out that it was the only way to save India from materialism. Twice it saved India from materialism, once, just before the Buddha came, materialism had spread to a fearful extent, and of a most hideous kind, not like that of the present day, but of a far worse nature. I am a materialist of a certain kind, because I believe that there is only One. That is what the materialist wants to tell you, only he calls it matter, and I call it God. The materialists admit that out of this one matter, all hope, and religion, and everything have come. I say all these have come out of Brahman. I mean here the old crude sort of materialism, eat, drink and be merry; there is neither God, nor soul, nor heaven; religion is a concoction of wicked priests, the materialism which taught the morality, that so long as you live, try to live happily; eat, though you have to borrow money for it, and mind you never think of paying. That was the way materialism went, and that kind of philosophy spread so much that even to-day it has got the name of the popular philosophy. Buddha brought the Vedanta out, gave it to the people, and saved India. Then a thou-

sand years after his death a similar state of things happened; the mobs, and masses, and all sorts of races, had been converted to Buddhism, and they were much given to these philosophical ideas, but most of these people were very low; they had all sorts of peculiarities; yet they all became very clean and good people and took up the philosophy at once. But it was only for a few years. Then they brought their gods, and devils, and hobgoblins, out again, and a tremendous hotch-potch was made of Buddhism in India. Then again came Materialism, license to the higher classes, and superstition to the lower, when Sankaracharya arose, and he revivified once more the Vedanta philosophy. He made it a rationalistic philosophy. In the Upanishads the arguments are very obscure. By Buddha the moral side of the philosophy was laid stress upon, and by Sankaracharya the intellectual side. It has been worked out and rationalised and placed before men. Just such a state of things is in Europe to-day. You may pray all the world over for the salvation of these sceptics, but they do not come, they want reason. So, once more the salvation of Europe depends on a rationalistic religion, and this is the only one—the non-duality, the Oneness, the idea of the Impersonal God—that ever had any hold on intellectual people. It comes whenever religion seems to disappear, and irreligion seems to prevail, and that is how it has taken ground in Europe and America, just for that reason. One thing more has to be added to it. In the old Upanishads there is grand poetry; they were poets: just as Plato says, inspiration comes unto people through poetry, it seemed as if these poets were raised above humanity to show these truths through poetry. They never preached, nor philosophised, nor wrote. Strains of music came out of them. In Buddha we had the great, universal

heart, infinite patience, making religion practical, bringing it to everyone's door; in Sankaracharya tremendous intellectual power, throwing the scorching light of day over everything. We want to-day the bright sun of intellectuality, and joined to it the heart of Buddha, the wonderful, infinite heart of love and mercy. Thus it will go on. It will be the highest philosophy, the highest intellectual reasoning, and side by side the most wonderful heart. Science and religion will shake hands and meet. Poetry and philosophy will shake hands and meet. And this will be the religion of the future, and if we can work it out, we may be sure that it will be for all times and professions. If you go home and think, you may find that every science has its defects, but this is the one way that modern science will take, for it has almost fallen into it. When one of your great teachers of science tells you that all things are the manifestation of that one force, do you not think it is the God of whom you hear in the Upanishads—

Agniryathaiko bhuvanam pravishto rupam rupam pratirupo babhuva.

E'kastatha sarvabhutantaratma rupam rupam pratirupo bahischa.

"As the one fire entering into the Universe is expressing itself in various forms, and yet is infinitely more besides, even so that one Soul is expressing Itself in every soul and yet is infinitely more besides."—Do you not see how science is going? The Hindu nation proceeded through the study of the mind, through metaphysics and logic. The European nations got hold of external nature, and now they are both coming to the same results. We find that searching through the mind we at last come to that Oneness, that Universal One, the Internal Soul of

everything, the Essence, and Reality of everything, the Ever-free, the Ever-blissful, the Ever-existing. Through material science we come to the same Oneness. It is that one of which all these are but the manifestation, and that which is the sum-total of everything which exists, and the goal, the trend, of humanity is toward freedom and not towards bondage. Why should men be moral? Because through that is the path towards freedom, and immorality towards bondage.

Another peculiarity of the Advaita system is that from its very start it is non-destructive. That is another glory, that boldness to preach,

Nabuddhibhedam janayedajnanam karmasanginam,
Joshayet sarvakarmani vidvan yuktah samacharan.

"Do not disturb the faith of any, even those who, even through ignorance, have attached themselves to lower forms of worship." That is what it says, Do not disturb, but help everyone to get higher and higher; include them all, if this be true, as this philosophy claims it to be, that it preaches a God who is the sum-total. If you have a universal religion which ought to apply to everyone, that religion must not be composed of only the parts, it must always be the sum-total. This idea is not clearly with any other system whatsoever. They are all equally struggling to attain to the whole. The existence of the part is merely for this, that it is always struggling to become the whole. So, from the very first it had no antagonism with the various sects existing in India. There are Dualists existing to-day, and their number is by far the largest in India, because Dualism naturally comes through uneducated minds. It is a very handy, natural, common-sense explanation, as they call it. But with these Dualists Advaita has no quarrel. The one thinks the God of the Universe is outside the Uni-

verse, somewhere in heaven, and the other that the God of the Universe is his own soul, and that it will be a blasphemy to call Him anything more distant. How dare you call Him a God in heaven, or a God anywhere else? Any idea of separation would be terrible. We can only be the nearest of the near. Words there are not in any language to express that nearness, except this one word, this oneness. With any other idea the Advaitist is frightened, just as the Dualist is frightened with the idea of the Advaita, and thinks it is blasphemy. So the latter is frightened at the idea of the Dualist. How dare man objectify Him! At the same time he knows what it is, and has no quarrel with the Dualist; the latter is all right. From his standpoint, as soon as he looks from the part, he will have to see many. Any view of God looked at from a part of this Universe can only be that projecting outside. It is a constitutional necessity, almost, of their standpoint. Let them have it. At the same time the Advaitist knows that whatever may be their defects or theories, they are all going to the same goal. There he differs entirely from the Dualist. The Dualists believe, all the world over, naturally, in a Personal God, who is only a bigger man, and just as a big man here is pleased with some and displeased with others, so, of course, the same idea attaches to the Personal God of the Dualist. He is arbitrarily pleased with somebody and displeased with somebody else. Naturally the Dualist comes to the conclusion that He has some as favourites, and not others. You will always see, in every nation, that "we are the favourites of our God, and nobody else; if you crawl within our circle, repentant, then you will be taken into favour with our God;" and some Dualists are so hard that they will insist that only the few that have been predestined to the favour of that God can be saved, the rest may crawl

and weep, but they cannot come in. I challenge you to show one Dualistic religion which has not this exclusiveness. And, therefore, in the nature of things, they are bound to fight and quarrel with each other, and this they have been doing. Again, these Dualists have the popular favour, for the vanities of the uneducated are always popular. But sometimes the vanities of the educated are popular no doubt, though not so popular as others. The Dualist thinks you cannot have a morality until you have a God with a rod in his hand, ready to punish you. How does it go ? Suppose a horse has to give us a lecture on morality, one of those very wretched cab horses, which only moves with the whip, as he has become accustomed ; he begins to speak about human beings, and says that the people of London must be very immoral. Why ? "Because I know they are not whipped regularly." The whip only makes them more immoral. The unthinking masses are generally Dualists, and they, poor fellows, have been persecuted for thousands of years in every country ; therefore, their idea of salvation is absence from the fear of punishment. I have been told by a clergyman in America—"What, no devil in your religion ? How can that be ?" But, on the other hand, we find that the best and the greatest men that have been born in the world have worked with that high Impersonal idea. It is the man who says in the New Testament, "I and my Father are One," whose power descends unto millions. For thousands of years it works for good. And we know that the same man, because he was a non-dualist, was merciful to others. He also told them, "Our Father which art in Heaven." To the masses who cannot see anything higher than a Personal God, he says, pray to your Father in Heaven ; and when the time comes, you will come to know as I have, "I in you, and you in me, so that ye may be all

one with the Father, for I and my Father are One." It was the great Buddha, in India, who never cared for the Dualist gods, and the masses always used to call him Atheist and Materialist, and what not, yet he was ready to give up his body for a poor goat. That man set in motion the highest moral ideas any nation of the human race can have. Wherever there is a moral code, it is a ray of light from that man. We cannot force the great hearts of the world into little narrow limits, and keep them there, and especially at this time in the history of humanity, when there is such a mass of intellectual development such as was never dreamed of, even a hundred years ago, a wave of scientific knowledge which nobody, even fifty years ago, would have dreamed of. Do you want to kill people by forcing them into narrow limits? It is impossible until you degrade them into animals and unthinking masses. What is now wanted is a combination of the highest intellectuality with the greatest heart expansion, infinite love and infinite knowledge, one with infinite existence, says the Vedantist, and he gives no other attribute to God except these three, that He is Infinite Existence, Infinite Knowledge, and Infinite Bliss, and he says that these three are One. Existence without knowledge and love, cannot be. Knowledge without love cannot be, and Love without knowledge cannot be. That is what we want, that harmony of Existence, Knowledge and Bliss Infinite. Our goal is that perfection of Existence, Knowledge, and Bliss, not one-sided development. We want harmony. It is possible to have the intellect of a gaint with the heart of a Buddha, and I hope we shall all struggle to attain to that one end.

UNITY IN DIVERSITY.

"THE Self-Existent One projected the senses outwards and, therefore, a man looks outward, not within himself. A certain wise one, desiring immortality, with inverted senses perceived the Self within." As we have been saying, the first inquiry that we find in the Samhita, and in the other books, was going outwards, and then a new idea came, that the reality of things is not to be found in the external world; not by looking out, as it were but by turning the eyes, as it is literally expressed, inwards. And the word used for the soul is very significant, it is He who has gone inward, the innermost reality of our being the heart centre, the core, from which, as it were, everything else comes out, the central sun, of which the mind, the body, the sense organs, and everything else that we have, are but rays going outwards. "Men of childish intellect, ignorant persons, run after desires, which are external, and enter the trap of far-reaching death, but the wise, understanding immortality, never seek for the eternal in this life of finite things." The same idea is related and made clear, that in this external world, which is full of finite things, it is impossible to see and find the Infinite. The Infinite must be sought in that which is infinite alone and the only thing infinite about us is that which is in us, our own soul. Neither the body, nor the mind, nor the world we see around us, not even our thoughts, are infinite. They all have beginning in time and finish in time. The Seer, he to whom they all belong, the soul of man, he who

is awake in the internal man, alone is in finite, and seek for the infinite cause of this whole Universe we must go there, and in the infinite soul alone we can find it." What is there that is here, and what is here that is there. He who sees the manifold is going from death to death." We have seen how at first there was the desire to go to heaven. When these ancient Aryans became dissatisfied with the world around them, naturally, they thought that after death they would go to some place where there would be all happiness without any miseries; these places they multiplied and called Svargas—the word may be translated as heavens—where there would be joy for ever, the body would become perfect, and also the mind, and there they would live with their forefathers. But as soon as philosophy came, men found it was simply impossible and absurd. The very idea of an infinite in place would be a contradiction in terms. A place must begin and is in time, therefore, they had to give that up. They found out that the gods who lived in these heavens had once been human beings here, and through their good works, or something else had become gods, and the godhoods, as they called them, were different states, different positions; none of the gods spoken of in the Vedas are permanent individuals.

For instance, Indra and Varuna are not the names of certain persons, but the names of places, governors and so on. The Indra who had been before is not the same person as the Indra of the present day, according to them; he has passed away, and another man from here has gone up and filled the place of Indra. So with all the gods. They are certain positions, which are filled successively by human souls, who have raised themselves to the position of gods, and yet—even they die. In the old Rig Veda we find the word immortality used with regard to these gods, but later

on it is dropped entirely, for they found that immortality which is beyond time and space cannot be spoken of with regard to any physical form, however fine it may be. However fine it may be it must have a beginning in time and space, for the necessary factors that entered into the make up of form are in space. Try to think of having form without space; it is impossible. Space is one of the materials, as it were, which makes up the form, and this is continually changing. Space and time are in Maya, and this idea is related in the line—"What is here, that is there too." If there are these gods, they must be bound by the same laws as apply here, and the one end of all laws, in their development, involves destruction and renewal again and again. These laws are taking the whole of matter to pieces, as it were, moulding out of it different forms, and inversely crushing them out into matter again. Everything born must die, and so, if there are heavens, the same laws must hold good there.

In this world we find that all happiness is followed by some sort of misery as its shadow. Life has its shadow death. They must go together, because they are not contradictory, not two separate existences, but different manifestations of the same unit factor, life and death, sorrow or happiness, good or evil. The dualistic conception that good and evil are two separate entities, and that they are both going on eternally, is absurd on the face of it. They are the various manifestations of one and the same fact, one time appearing as bad, and at another time as good. The difference does not exist in kind, but only in degree. They differ from each other in degree of intensity. We find as a fact that the same nerve systems carry good and bad sensations alike, and when the nerves are

injured neither sensation comes to us. If a certain nerve is paralysed, we do not get the pleasurable feelings that used to come along that wire, and at the same time we do not get the painful feelings either. They are never two, but the same. Again, the same thing produces pleasure and pain at different times of life. The same phenomenon will produce pleasure in one, and pain to another. The eating of meat produces pleasure to the man, but pain to the animal which is being eaten. There has never been anything which has pleased everyone alike. Some are pleased, others displeased. So on it will go. Therefore, on the face of it, this duality of existence is denied, and what follows from this? I told you in my last lecture that we can never ultimately have everything good on this earth and nothing bad. It may have disappointed and frightened some. But I cannot help it and I am open to conviction when I am shown the contrary; but until that can be proved to me, and I can find that it is true, I cannot say so.

The general argument against my statement and apparently a very convincing one is this, that in the course of evolution, all that is evil in what we see around us is gradually being eliminated, and the result is that if this elimination continues after millions of years, a time will come when all the evil will have been extirpated, and the good alone will remain. This is apparently a very sound argument, would to God it were true; but there is a fallacy, and it is this, that it takes for granted that good and evil both are quantities that are eternally fixed. It takes for granted that there is a definite mass of evil which may be represented by 100, and likewise of good, and that this mass of evil is being diminished everyday, and only the good remaining. But is it so? The history of the world

shows that evil is a continuously increasing quantity, as well as good. Take the lowest man; he lives in the forest. His sense of enjoyment is very small, and so of misery. His misery is entirely on this sense plane. If he does not get plenty of food he is miserable, give him plenty of food and freedom to rove and to hunt, and he is perfectly happy. His happiness consists only in the senses, and his misery also. See that man increasing in knowledge; his happiness is increasing, intellect is opening to him, sense enjoyment has evolved into intellectual enjoyment. He now feels wonderful pleasure in reading a beautiful poem. A mathematical problem takes up his whole life, and he is absorbed in its intense pleasure. But, with that, the fine nerves are becoming more and more susceptible to intense miseries of which the savage did not think, and he suffers mental pain. The sense of separation when the husband does not love the wife, quarrels, and in a dozen things the desires are intensely upon him which the savage did not know. Take a very simple illustration. In Thibet there is no marriage, and there is no jealousy, and yet we know that marriage is a much higher state. The Thibetans have not known the wonderful enjoyment, the blessing of chastity, the happiness of having a chaste, virtuous wife, and a chaste, virtuous husband. These people cannot feel that. And similarly they do not feel the intense jealousy of the unchaste wife or husband, of unfaithfulness on either side, with all the heart-burnings and miseries which believers in chastity experience. On one side the latter gain happiness, and on the other misery too.

Take your country, which is the richest the world ever knew, and which is more luxurious than any other country, and see how intense is the misery, how many more lunatics you have, compared with other races, only because the

desires are so keen. A man must keep up a high standard. The amount of money you spend in one year would be a fortune to a man in India, and you cannot preach to him because the surroundings are such, that that man must have so much money or he is crushed. The wheel of society is rolling on; it stops not for widows' tears or orphans' wails. You must move on, or you will be crushed under it. That is the state of things everywhere. Your sense of enjoyment is developed, your society is very much more beautiful than some others. You have so many more things to enjoy. But those who have fewer have much less misery than you have in this country. So on, you can argue throughout, the higher the ideal you have in the brain the greater is your enjoyment, and the more profound your misery. One is like the shadow of the other, so to say; that the evils are being eliminated may be true, but if so, the good also must be dying out. But are not evils multiplying fast, and diminishing on the other side, if I may so put it? If good increases in arithmetical proportion, evil increases in geometrical proportion. And this is Màyà. It means that it is neither optimism nor pessimism. It is not the position of Vedànta that this world is a miserable world. That would be a lie. At the same time we say it is not true, it is trying to deceive, to say this world is full of happiness and blessings. So it is useless to tell children that this world is all good, and flowers, and milk and honey. That is what we have all dreamt. At the same time it is erroneous to think because one man has suffered more than another that all is evil. It is this duality, this play of good and evil, and at the same time the Vedanta steps in and says one more word. Do not think that good and evil are two, or, in the abstract, do not believe that good and evil are two separate essences, for they are one and the same thing appearing in

different degrees and in different guises, and producing differences of feeling in the same mind. So the first thought of Vedanta is the finding of unity in the external, the one manifesting itself, however different it may appear in manifestation. Think of the old crude theories of the Persians—two gods creating this world. The good god doing everything that is pleasurable, and the bad one everything else. On the very face of it you find the absurdity, for if it is carried out every law of nature must have two parts, and this law of nature is sometimes manipulated by one god, and then he goes away and the other manipulates it. It is the law of Unity that gives us our food, and the same law kills many men through accidents or misadventure. Then the difficulty comes, that both are working at the same time, and these two gods keep themselves in harmony, by injuring one and doing good to another. This was a crude case, of course, the crudest way of expressing the duality of existence. But then take the more advanced philosophy, the abstract cases of telling people that this world is partly good and partly bad. This again is absurd arguing from the same standpoint.

As such, we find first of all that this world is neither optimistic nor pessimistic; it is a mixture of both, and as we go on we shall find that the whole blame is taken out of the hands of nature and put upon us. And again the Vedanta makes for a great hope. It is not that it is a denial of evil because it analyses boldly the fact as it is, and does not seek to conceal anything. It is not hopeless; it is not agnostic. It finds out a remedy but it wants to place that remedy on adamantine foundations, not by shutting the child's mouth and blinding its eyes with something which is transparently untrue, and which the child will find out in a few days. I remember

when I was a young child, a young man's father died and left him poor, and with a large family to support. He found that his father's friends were his worst enemies in reality, and one day he had a conversation with a clergyman who offered this consolation, "Oh, it is all good, all is sent for our good." That is the old method of trying to put a piece of gold cloth on an old sore. It is a confession of weakness, of absurdity. Then this young man went away, and six months afterwards the clergyman had a son born, and the young man was invited to the party for thanksgiving. Then the clergyman began to pray, "Thank God for His mercies." And the young man stood up and said, "Stop; this is all misery." The clergyman asked why. "Because when my father died it was all good, though apparently evil; so now this is apparently good, but really evil." Is this the way to cure the misery of the world? Be good and have mercy to those who suffer. Do not try to patch it up, nothing will cure this world; go beyond it.

This world is a world of good and evil always. Wherever there is good, evil follows, but beyond and behind all the manifestation, the contradiction, the Vedanta finds out that unity. It says give up what is evil and give up what is good. What then remains? It says good and evil are not all we have. Behind these stand something which is yours, the real you, beyond every evil, and beyond every good too, and it is that which is manifesting itself as good and bad. Know that first, and then, and then alone, you will be an optimist, and not before; for you will then control the whole thing. Control these manifestations and then you will be at liberty to manifest the real just as you like. Then alone you will be able to manifest it only as good or only as evil, just as you like; but be first master

16

of yourself, stand up and be free, go beyond the pale of these laws, for these laws do not extend to all of nature, they are only part of your being. First find out that you are not the slave of nature, never were and never will be: that this nature, infinite as you may think it, is only finite, but one drop in the ocean, and your nature is as the ocean; you are beyond the stars, or the sun, or the moon. They are like mere bubbles compared with your infinite being. Know that and you will control both good and evil. Then alone the whole vision will change and you will stand up and say, how beautiful is good and how wonderful is evil.

That is what the Vedanta wants you to do. It does not propose any slipshod remedy to cover things over with gold paper, and the more the wound festers putting on the more gold paper. This life is a hard fact; work out of it if you can, boldly, though it may be adamantine; no matter, the soul is greater. It lays no responsibility on little gods; but you are the makers of your fortunes. You make yourselves suffer for good and evil, and it is you who put your hands before your eyes and say it is dark. Hands off and see the light; you are effulgent, you are perfect already, from the very beginning. We understand it now. "He goes from death to death who sees the many here. See that One and be free."

How are we to know it? Nay, even this very mind, so deluded, so weak, so easily led, even this mind can be strong and may catch a glimpse of that knowledge, that Oneness, and then it saves us from dying again and again. "As water which falls upon a mountain breaks into pieces, and so many various streams run down the sides of the mountain, so all the energies which you see here are that one Unit beginning." It has become manifold falling upon Maya. Do not run for the manifold; go towards the One.

"He is in all that moves; He is in all that is pure. He fills the Universe; He is in the sacrifice; He is the Guest in the house; He is in man, in water, in animals; in truth He is the Great one. He is the one fire coming into this world. He is manifesting Himself in various forms. Even so that one Soul of the Universe is manifesting Himself in all these various forms. As the one air coming into this Universe manifesting itself in various forms, even so the one Soul of all souls, of all beings, is manifesting Himself in all forms." This is when you have understood this Unity, and not before. It is all optimism, seeing Him everywhere. The question is, that if all this be true, that that Pure One, the Self, the Infinite, has entered all this, how is it that He suffers, how is it that He becomes miserable, impure? He does not, says the Upanishads. "As the sun is the cause of the eye-sight of every being, it is not made defective by the defect in every eye, even so the Self of all is not affected by the miseries of the body, or every misery that is around you." I may have some disease, and see everything yellow, but the sun is not affected. "He is the One, the Creator of all, the Ruler of all, the internal Soul of every being. He who makes His Oneness manifold. Thus sages who realise him as the Soul of their souls, unto them belong eternal peace; unto none else, unto none else. He who in this world of evanescence finds Him who never changes, he who in this universe of death finds that one life, he who in this manifold finds that Oneness, and all those who realise Him as the Soul of their souls, to them belongs eternal peace; unto none else, unto none else. Where to find Him in the external world, where to find Him in the suns, and moons, and stars. There the sun cannot illumine, nor the moon, nor the stars, the flash of lightning cannot illumine the place; what to

speak of this mortal fire. He shining, everything else shines. It is His light that they have borrowed, and He is shining through them." Here is another beautiful sentence. Those of you who have been in India and have heard of the Banyan tree, how it comes from one root, and spreads far around, will understand. He is that Banyan tree; His root is above, and has branched out until it has become this Universe, and however far it extends every one of these fangs and branches is connected. He is the root.

Various heavens are spoken of in the Brahmana portion of the Vedas, and the idea of the Upanishads implies giving up the idea of going to heaven. All the work is not in this heaven, or that heaven, it is here in the soul; places do not signify anything. Here is another passage which shows these different states. "In the heaven of the forefathers, as a man sees things in a dream, so the real truth is seen." As in dreams we see things hazy and not so distinct, so we see things there. There is another heaven called the Gandharva; there it is still less distinct; as a man sees his own reflection in the water, so is the reality seen there. The highest heaven that the Hindus conceive is called the Brahmaloka, and in this the truth is seen much more clearly but not quite distinctly, like light and shade; but as a man sees his own face in a mirror, perfect, distinct, and clear, so is the truth shining in the soul of man. The highest heaven, therefore, is here in our own souls, the greatest temple of worship is the human soul, greater than all heavens, says the Vedanta, for in no heaven anywhere can we understand the reality as distinctly and clearly as here in this life, in our own soul. You may change places, just as we have seen. I have thought while in India that the cave would give clearer vision. Then I found it was

not so. Then I thought the forest would be better. Then I thought Benares. The same state of things goes on, because we make our own worlds. If I am evil the whole world is evil to me. That is what the Upanishad says. And the same thing applies to all. If I die here and go to heaven, I should find the same. Until you are pure it is no use going to caves, or forests, or to Benares, or to heaven, and if you have polished your mirror it does not matter where you live, you get the reality just as it is. So it is useless work, running hither and thither, spending energy in vain, which should be spent alone, in polishing the mirror. The same idea is expressed again.

"None see Him, none see His form with the eyes. It is in the mind, the pure mind, he is seen, and thus immortality is gained." Those that were at the summer lectures on Raja Yoga will be interested to know that what was taught then was a different kind of Yoga. Here in philosophy they have also a Yoga, but this is what is meant, that where there is control of all our senses, these are held as slaves by the human soul; when they cannot disturb his mind then the Yogin has reached the goal. "When all vain desires of the heart have been thrown out, then this very mortal becomes immortal, then here he becomes one with God. When all the knots of the heart are cut asunder, then the mortal becomes immortal, and he enjoys Brahman. Here, nowhere else."

A few words ought to be said here. Generally you will hear that this Vedanta, this philosophy and Eastern systems, are only looking to something beyond, and letting go the enjoyments and struggles of this life. I have read to you a few passages, and that one idea is present. It is entirely wrong. Ignorant people who do not know anything of Eastern thought, and never had brain enough

among them all to understand anything of the real teaching, tell you that you are going outside to the other world. On the other hand, we read in black and white here that they do not want to go to any other world, but depreciate these worlds as places where people weep and laugh for a little and then die. So long as we are weak we shall have to go through the same thing there, but whatever is true is here, and that is the human soul. And this also is insisted upon, that we cannot escape the inevitable by committing suicide, we cannot evade it. But the right path is hard to find. The Hindu mind is just as practical as the Western, only we differ in our views of life. One man says build a good house, and have good clothes and good food, and intellectual knowledge, knowledge of science and so on, this is the whole of life; and in that he is immensely practical. But the Hindu says the knowledge of the world means knowledge of the soul, metaphysics, and he wants to enjoy that life. In America there is a great Agnostic orator, he is a very noble man, a very good man, and a very fine speaker. He lectured on religion and said it was no use, we need not bother our heads about other worlds, and he employed this simile: we have an orange here, and we want to squeeze all the juice out of it. I met him once and said, "I agree with you entirely." I have this orange and I want to squeeze the juice out of it. Only we differ as to the fruit. You think it is an orange, I think it is a mango. You think it is only necessary to live here and eat and drink and have a little scientific knowledge, but you have no right to say, that is the whole idea of life. To me such a conception is nothing. If I had only to know how an apple falls to the ground, or how an electric current shakes my nerves, I would commit suicide the next moment. I want to know the heart of things, the very life itself. Your study is the manifestaion

of life, mine is the life itself. I want to squeeze the juice out of it even in this life. My philosophy says you must know the whole of it and drive out your heavens and hells and all these superstitions, even if they exist in the same sense that this world exists. I would know the heart of this life, its very essence, how it is, not only how it works and what are its manifestations. I want the why of everything, I leave the how to children. As one of your noblemen said, 'While I am smoking a cigarette, if I wrote down everything that happens, it would be the science of the cigarette.' It is good and great to be scientific. Lord bless them in their search, but when a man says that is all, he is talking foolishly, never caring to know the *raison d'etre* of life, never studying existence itself. I may argue that all your knowledge is nonsense without basis. You are studying the manifestations of life, and when I ask you what life is you say you do not know. You are welcome to your study, but leave me mine."

Yet I myself am practical, very practical, in my own way. So all these ideas about being practical are nonsense. You are practical in one way, and others in another. But a man of another type of mind does not talk. If he is told that he will find out the truth standing on one leg, he will find it that way. Another kind of man hears there is a goldmine somewhere, with savages all round. Three men go. Two perish but one succeeds. The same man has heard there is a soul, and is content to leave it to the clergyman to preach. But the first man will not go near the savages. He says it may be dangerous, but if you tell him that on the top of Mount Everest, 30,000 feet above the sea level, there is a wonderful sage who can give him knowledge of the soul, he goes, without clothes or anything—40,000 may be killed, but

one finds out the truth. These are practical, too, but the mistake is calling what you term the world, the whole of life. Yours is the vanishing point of enjoyment of the senses; there never was anything permanent in it, it brings misery more and more. Mine brings eternal peace, and yours brings only perpetual sorrows.

I do not say your veiw of what is practical is wrong. You are welcome to your interpretation. Great good and man's blessing come out of it, but do not, therefore, condemn my view. Mine also is practical in its own way. Let us all work on our own plans. Would to God all of us were equally practical on both sides. I have seen some scientists who were equally practical scientists and spiritual men, and it is my great hope that in course of time the whole of humanity will be efficient in all such things. When a kettle of water is boiling, if you look at the phenomena you find a bubble rising in one corner, and another in an opposite corner, then the bubbles begin to multiply, and four or five join together, and at last they all join, and a tremendous motion goes on. So this world is very similar. Each individual is like a bubble, and the nations resemble many bubbles. Gradually these nations are joining, and I am sure the day will come when such a thing as a nation will vanish, and this separation will vanish; that Oneness to which we are all going, whether we like it or not, will become manifest; we are brothers by nature, and have become separate. A time must come when all these ideas will be joined, and every man and woman in this world will be as intensely practical in the scientific world as in the spiritual, and then that Oneness, the harmony of oneness, will pervade the whole world. The whole world will become *jivanmuktas*—free whilst living. And we are all fighting towards that one end through all our jealousies

and hatreds, co-operation and antagonisms. A tremendous stream is flowing towards the ocean. There are little bits of paper and straw in the stream. They may struggle to go up or down, but, in the long run, must follow down to the ocean. So you and I and all nature are like these little bits of paper rushing in mad currents towards that ocean of life, perfection and God; we may struggle to go back, to get up or down, and play all sorts of pranks, but in the long run we must go and join this ocean of Life and Bliss.

THE COSMOS.

THE MACROCOSM.

THE flowers that we see all around us are beautiful, beautiful is the rising of the morning sun, beautiful are the variegated hues of nature. The whole universe is beautiful, and man has been enjoying it since his presence on earth. Sublime and awe-inspiring are the mountains, gigantic rushing rivers rolling towards the ocean, the trackless deserts, the almost infinite sea, the starry heavens, all these are awe-inspiring and sublime, and beautiful. The whole mass of existence we designate by the word Nature has been acting on the human mind since time immemorial. It has been pressing on the thought of man, and as the reaction of that pressure, have been coming questions, what these are, whence these are. As old as the time of the oldest portion of the Vedas, the most ancient human composition, we find the same question asked, Whence is this ? When there was neither aught nor naught, and darkness was hidden in darkness, who projected this universe ? How ? Who knows the secret ? And the question has come down to us at the present time. Millions of times attempts have been made to answer it, yet millions of times it will have to be answered. It is not that each answer was a failure ; everyone of the answers to this question consists in one part, of truth, and this truth will gather strength as time rolls on. I will try to present before you the framework of the answer that I have gathered from the ancient

philosophers of India, in harmony with modern human knowledge.

We find that in this oldest of questions a few points have been already known. First is, that when there was neither aught nor naught, there was a time when this world did not exist, these planets and luminaries, our mother earth, the seas and oceans, the rivers and mountains, cities and villages, human races, animals, plants, birds, all this infinite variety of creation; there was a time when it did not exist. Are we sure of that? We will try to trace how this conclusion is arrived at. What does man see around him? Take a little plant. He finds the plant comes out, lift itself slowly from beneath the sods, grow, and grow, and grow, till it becomes perhaps a gigantic tree. Again it dies, leaving only the seed. It completes the circle; it comes out of the seed, it becomes the tree, and it ends in the seed again. Look at a bird, how from the egg-shell it springs, becomes a beautiful bird, lives a life, and then dies again, leaving only other eggs, seeds of future birds. So with the animals, so with men. Everything begins, as it were, from certain seeds, certain rudiments, certain fine forms, becomes grosser and grosser, and develops, goes on that way for a certain time, again goes back to that fine form, and subsides. The rain drop in which the beautiful sunbeam is playing now has been drawn up in the form of vapour from the ocean, goes far away into the air, reaches the mountain; there it changes into snow, again into water, again rolls back down through hundreds of miles to the mother ocean. So with everything in Nature with which we are surrounded, and in modern times we know that the huge mountains are being worked upon by the glaciers and rivers, slowly but surely pounding them, pulverizing them into sands, that sand

drifting away into the ocean, settling down on the bed of the ocean, layer after layer, becoming hard as rocks, again in the future to be heaped up and become mountains of a future generation. Again it will be pounded, pulverized, and that course goes on. From sands rise these mountains; unto sands they go. So with big luminaries: this earth of ours has come out of nebulous forms, becoming colder and colder, throwing up this crystallized form upon which we live, and in the future will again become colder and colder till it dies, and will break into pieces, will be pulverized, go back into rudimentary nebulous fine form. This is happening before us everyday. This has been happening through time immemorial. This is the whole history of man, the whole history of Nature, the whole history of life.

If it be true that nature is uniform in all her works, if it be true, and so far no human experience has contradicted it, that the same plan and method of laws under which a small grain of sand is created, works in creating the gigantic suns and stars, and all this universe,—if it be true that the whole of this universe is built in exactly the same plan as one atom, if it be true that the same law prevails throughout the universe, then, as it has been already said in the Vedas, "Knowing one lump of clay we know the nature of all the clay that is the universe." Take up one little plant and study its life, and we know the universe as it is. Watch the movement in one grain of sand, and we understand the whole secret of the universe. Therefore, applying this study to these phenomena, we find in the first place, that everything is almost similar at the beginning and the end. The mountain comes from the sand, goes back to the sand; the river comes out of vapour, and goes back to vapour; plant life comes from the seed, and goes back to

the seed; human life comes out of human germs and goes back to human germs. The stars and the rivers, and the planets come out of nebulous state and go back to nebulous state. What do we learn? That the manifested, or the grosser state is the effect and the finer state is the cause. Already it has been demonstrated by the great father of all philosophy, Kapila, thousands of years ago, that destruction means going back to the causes. If this table here is destroyed, it will only go back to its causes, to those fine forms and particles which, combined, made this form which we call table. If a man dies, he will go back to the elements which gave him his body; if this earth dies it will go back to the elements which gave it form. This is what is called destruction; going back to the cause. Therefore we learn that the effect is the same as the cause, not different. It is only in another form. The materials which compose this table are the causes, and the table the effect, and all the causes are present here. This glass is an effect, and it had its causes, and these causes are already present in this effect. A certain amount of the material called glass *plus* the force in the hands of the manufacturer; these are the two causes, the instrumental and the material; these two causes have combined in this form called a glass. Both of them are present. The force which was in the wheel of some machine is present as the power of adhesion, and without that the particles will fall apart, and the glass material is also present. It is only a manifestation of these fine causes in a new shape, and if this glass be broken to pieces, the force which was here in the form of adhesion, will go back and join its own element, and the particles of glass will go back and remain the same until becoming fresh forms.

Thus we find that the effect is never different from

the cause. It is only that this effect is a reproduction of the cause in a grosser form. Next we learn that all these little particular forms which we call plants or animals or men are being repeated *ad infinitum* rising and falling. The seed produces the tree. The tree goes down and becomes the seed, again it comes up as another tree, goes down as another seed, again comes up as another tree, and so on; there is no end to it. The water drop rolls down the mountains, goes back to the ocean again, rises again as vapour, goes back to the mountain, and again comes down to the river. Rising and falling, the cycle is going on. So with all lives, so with all existence that we can see, feel, hear, imagine. Everything that is within the bounds of our knowledge and is proceeding in the way, just as breathing in and breathing out in the human body. The whole of this creation, therefore, is progressing in this form one wave rising, another falling, rising again, falling again. Each wave has its hollow, each hollow has its wave. In this whole universe, on account of its uniformity, the same law must apply. So we see that the whole of this universe must melt down, as it were, into its causes, the sun, moon, stars, earth, the mind, the body, everything we have in this universe must melt down and come to its finer causes, disappear, as it were, be destroyed. But they will live in the causes as fine forms. Out of them they will emerge again and throw up earths, and suns, moons and stars, once more.

There is one fact more to learn about this rising and falling. The seed comes out of the tree; it does not immediately become the tree. It has to have a period of rest, or rather a period of very fine unmanifested action. The seed has to work for some time beneath the soil. It has to break itself into pieces, as it were, degenerate itself, and

the regeneration comes back to it out of that degeneration. The whole of this universe, therefore, has to work for a period in that minute form, unseen, unmanifested, what is called chaos, the beginning of creation, and after that comes out a fresh projection. The whole of a period of one manifestation of that wave, of this universe, going down into the finer forms, remaining there some time, and coming out again, is in Sanskrit called a Kalpa, or a cycle. The whole of this universe is progressing in these cycles, from the biggest universe to every particle of matter that is inside it. Everything is moving in these waves and cycles. Next comes a very important question, especially for modern times. We see that the finer forms develop slowly and slowly, and gradually become grosser and grosser. We have seen that the cause is the same as the effect, and the effect is only the cause in another form. Therefore, this whole universe cannot be produced out of nothing. Nothing can come without cause, and not only so, but the cause will be there itself in fine form.

So out of what has this universe been produced? From a preceding fine universe. Out of what has man been produced? The preceding fine form. Out of what has the tree been produced? Out of the seed; the whole of the tree was there in the seed. It comes out and becomes manifest. So the whole of this universe has been created out of this very universe existing in a minute form. It has been made manifest now. It will go back to that minute form, and again will be made manifest. Now we find that the fine forms slowly come out and become grosser and grosser until they reach their limit, and when they reach their limit they go back and back, finer and finer again. This coming out of the fine and becoming grosser and grosser, simply changing, as it were, the position of its

parts, is what, in modern times, is called evolution. This is very true, perfectly true, we see it in our lives. There cannot be any possible quarrel with these evolutionists for any rational man. But we have to learn one thing more. We have to go one step further, and what is that? That every evolution is preceded by an involution. The seed is the father of the tree, but another tree was itself the father of the seed. The seed is the fine form out of which the big tree comes, and another big tree was the form which has got involved in that seed. The whole of the tree is there present. No tree can be produced out of nothing, but we see that the tree will come out of the seed, and certain seeds will produce certain trees, and not others. So it shows that the cause of that tree was the seed, and that seed alone, and that the whole of that tree was in that seed. The whole of the human being was in that one protoplasm, and it comes out slowly and slowly. The whole of this universe was present in the cosmic fine universe. Everything is present in its cause, in its fine form. Therefore evolution is true, this gradual unfolding of grosser and grosser forms, these manifestations; this is perfectly true, but each case has been preceded by an involution. So the little cell which becomes afterwards the great man, was simply the involved great man, and he will manifest himself and become evolved as a great man. If this is clear we have no quarrel with the evolutionists, for as we go on we will see that if they admit this step, instead of the evolutionists destroying religion, they will be the greatest supporters of it.

So far we see then that nothing can be created in the sense of something coming out of nothing. Everything exists through eternity, and will exist through eternity. Only the movement is in succeeding waves and hollows. Going back to fine forms, coming out into big propor-

tions. This is the involution and evolution going on throughout the whole of Nature. Therefore, the whole of this universe must have been involuted before it came out, and has unfolded itself in all these various forms to be involved again once more. Take for instance, the life of a little plant. We find the two things that make the plant a unity by itself; its growth and development, its decay and death. These make one unity, the plant life. So, taking that plant life as only one link in the chain of life, we may take the whole series, one life, beginning in the protoplasm and ending in the most perfect man. Man is one link, and, as the evolutionists say, the various shapes of monkeys, then lower animals and plants are other links. Now go back to the smallest particles with which it started, and take the whole series as but one life, and applying the law which we have just found out, we find that every evolution here is the involution of something which existed previously, and this whole series, beginning with the lowest, and reaching up to the highest, the most perfect man must have been the involution of something else. The involution of what? That is the question. What was involved? The evolutionist will tell you that your idea of God is wrong. Why? Because you say intelligence created the universe, but on the other hand we find everyday that intelligence comes much later on. It is in man and the higher animals that we find intelligence, but millions of years have passed in this world before this intelligence came. Do not get frightened, but apply your theory. The tree comes out of the seed, goes back to that seed; the beginning and the end are the same. The earth comes out of cause and ends in cause. What is the end of this whole link? We know that if we can find the beginning, we can find the end. *E converso*, if we find the end we can find the begin-

ning. If that is so, take this whole evolutionary series, from the protoplasm at one end to the perfect man at the other. This whole series is one life. In the end we find the perfect man, so in the beginning, it must be the same. Therefore, that protoplasm was the involution of the highest intelligence. You may not see it, but that involved intelligence is what is uncoiling itself until it becomes manifested in the most perfect man. That can be perfectly mathematically demonstrated. If the law of conservation of energy is true, you cannot get anything out of a machine until you put it therein first. The work that you get out of an engine is exactly what you have put into it in the form of water and coal, not one hair's breadth more or less. The work I am doing now is just what I have put into me, in the shape of air, and food and other things. It is only a question of change and manifestation. There cannot be added in the economy of this universe one particle of matter or one foot-pound of force, nor can one particle of matter or foot-pound of force be taken out. If that be the case, what is this intelligence? If it was not present in the protoplasm, it must have come all of a sudden, something coming out of nothing, which is absurd. It, therefore, follows absolutely that just as we see in any other being, where it begins there it ends, only sometimes it is involved, at other times evolved. The perfect man is the one end of this link—the free man, the God-man, who has gone beyond the laws of nature, transcended everything. No more has he to run through this chain, birth and death; that man, the "Christ-man," as the Christians call him, the "Buddha-man," as the Buddhists call him, the "Free," as the Yogis call him, that perfect man is the one end, and that everybody involved was in this very cell of the protoplasm.

Now what becomes of this universe? What do we

see in the end of this universe? Intelligence, is it not? The last to come in this universe is intelligence. And as the last in order of creation, according to the evolutionists, intelligence must also be the Lord of creation, the cause. What is the last idea each man has of this universe? It is intelligence, the adjustment of part to part, and so forth, the ancient design theory, the display of intelligence. This is the last to come, we admit with the modern materialists. It is the last in the order of creation. Very good; but there when millions of years before man was born, when there was no intelligence; that is to say, there was no manifested intelligence, but there was unmanifested intelligence; and the end of this creation is intelligence, man. The beginning is what therefore? Intelligence. At the beginning that intelligence becomes involved, and in the end that intelligence gets evolved. The sum-total of the intelligence displayed in the universe must, therefore, be the involved universal intelligence unfolding itself. This universal cosmic intelligence is what we call God. Call it by any other name, it is absolutely certain that in the beginning, was that infinite cosmic intelligence. The cosmic intelligence got involved and became fine, and that very intelligence manifests, evolves itself, until it comes to the perfect man, the "Christ-man," the "Buddha-man." Then it comes back to its own source. That is why all the Scriptures say, "In Him we live, and move and have our being." That is why all the Scriptures preach that we came from God, and go back to God. Do not be frightened by philological terms; if terms frighten you, you are not fit to be philosophers. This is the cosmic intelligence which the theologians call God.

I have been asked many times, why do you use that old word God? Because it is the best word to use; you

cannot find a better word than that, because all the aspirations, all the pleasures, all the hopes of humanity have centered in that word. It is impossible now to change the word; it cannot be done. When the words were first coined by great saints, gigantic souls, they realized them, and understood the meaning fully. But as they go on in Society, ignorant people take these words up, and the result is that they lose their glory. So the word God has come from time immemorial, and all that is great and holy, and all that idea of this cosmic intelligence, hangs round it. Do you mean to say that because some fool says it is not all right, we should throw it off, and another comes and says take *my* word, and another take my word? If so there will be no end to these foolish words. Use the old word, only use it better, cleanse the mind of superstition, and realize fully what this great ancient word means. If you understand what is meant by the power of the laws of association, you will know that with these words are associated multitudes and multitudes of majestic ideas of force, they have been used by millions of human souls, millions of people have worshipped these words, and associated with them all that is highest and best, all that is rational, all that is loveable, all that is great and grand in human nature. So these words come as the suggestions of these associations, and cannot be given up. If I had tried to explain all this to you, by just telling you that God created the universe, it would have conveyed no meaning. Yet, after all this struggle we have come back to Him, the Ancient One.

Now then, what do we see? That the beginning of all the manifestation of this cosmic energy, call it by various names, as matter, or thought, or force, or intelligence, or whatever name you choose to give it, is simply the manifest-

ation of that cosmic intelligence, or, as we shall call Him henceforth, the Supreme Lord. Everything that you see or feel or hear, the whole universe is His creation, to be a little more accurate, is His projection; still more accurate, the Lord Himself. It is He who is shining as the sun and the stars, He is the mother earth, He is the ocean Himself. He comes as gentle showers, He is the gentle breeze that we breathe and He it is who is working as force in the body. He is the speech that speaks, He is the man who is talking. He is the audience that is here. He is the platform on which I stand, He is the light that enables me to see your faces. It is all He. He Himself is both the material and the efficient cause of this universe and He it is that gets involved in the minute cell, and evolves at the other end, and becomes God again. He it is that comes down and becomes the lowest atom, and slowly unfolding His nature, rejoins Himself. This is the mystery of the universe. Thou art the man, Thou art the woman, Thou art the strong man walking in the pride of youth, Thou art the old man tottering on crutches, Thou art in everything, Thou art everything, O Lord. This is the only solution of the Cosmos, that satisfies the human intellect. In one word, we are born of Him, we live in Him, and unto Him we return.

THE COSMOS.

THE MICROCOSM.

THE human mind naturally wants to get outside; the mind, as it were, wants to peer out of the body, through the channels of the organs. The eye must see, the ear must hear, the senses must sense the external world; and naturally the beauties and sublimities of Nature captivate the attention of men first. The first questions that the human soul asked, were as to the external world. The solution of the mystery was asked of the sky, of the stars, of the heavenly bodies, of the earth, of the rivers, of the mountains, of the ocean, and we find traces of this in all ancient religions, how at first the groping human mind grasps at anything external. There is a river-god, a sky-god, a cloud-god, a rain-god: everything external, all which we now call the powers of Nature, became metamorphosed, transfigured, into wills, into gods, into heavenly messengers. As the question went deeper and deeper, these external mainfestations failed to satisfy the human mind, and the energy turned inward—the question was asked of man's own soul. From the cosmos, the question was reflected back to the microcosm; from the external world the question was reflected into the internal world. From analysing the external nature, man begins to analyse the internal; it comes with the higher state of civilization, with the deeper insight into nature, with a much higher plane of growth, this questioning of the internal man.

The subject of discussion this afternoon is this internal man. No question is so near and dear to men's hearts

as this of the internal man. How many millions of times, in how many countries, has this question been asked? Sages and kings, poor and rich, saints and sinners, every man, every woman, all have from time to time asked this question: Is there nothing permanent in this evanescent human life? Is there not something which does not die away when this body dies? Is there not something living when this frame crumbles into a handful of dust? Is there not something which survives the fire which burns the body into ashes? And if so, what is its destiny? Where does it go? Whence did it come? These questions have been asked again and again, and so long as this creation lasts, so long as there are human brains to think, this question will have to be asked. Yet, it is not that the answer did not come; each time the answer came, and as time rolls on, the answer will gain strength, more and more. The question has been answered once for all, thousands of years ago, and through all subsequent time it is being re-stated, re-illustrated, made clearer to our intellect. What we have to do, therefore, is to make a re-statement of the answer; we do not pretend to throw any new light on these all-absorbing problems; our proposal is to attempt to put before you the ancient, the hoary truth, in the language of modern times, to speak the thoughts of the ancients in the language of the moderns, to speak the thoughts of the philosophers in the language of the people, to speak the thoughts of the angels in the language of men, to speak the thoughts of God in the language of poor humanity, so that men will understand it; for we shall see later on that the same divine existence from which the ideas emanated, is present even in man; the same existence which created the thoughts will understand them Himself as manifested in man.

I am looking at you. How many things are necessary

for this vision? First the eyes; I must have eyes. If I am complete in every way, and yet have no eyes, I will not be able to see you. The first thing necessary, therefore, is that I must be in possession of eyes. Secondly, that will not be sufficient, if there is not something behind the eyes, the real organ of vision. The eyes are not the organs they are but the instruments of vision, and the organ is behind, the nerve centre in the brain. If that centre be injured, a man may have the clearest pair of eyes, yet will not see anything. So, it is necessary that this centre, or the real organ, be there. Thus with everyone of our senses. The external ear is but the instrument to carry the vibration of sound inward, and it must be carried to the centre. Yet that is not sufficient. Sometimes in your library you are intently reading a book, and the clock strikes twelve, but you do not hear. The sound was there; the pulsations in the air were there, the ear was there, the centre was there, and these vibrations have been carried to the ear, the ear has carried them to the centre, and yet you did not hear. What was the defect? The mind was not there. Thus we see that the third step is, that the mind must be there. First the external instrument, then this external instrument will carry the sensation to the organ, and the organ must be joined to the mind. When the mind is not joined to the organ, the organ and the ear may take the impression, and yet we shall not be conscious of it. The mind, too, is only the carrier; it has to carry the sensation still forward and give it to the intellect. The intellect determines upon what is brought to it. Still this is not sufficient. The intellect must carry it forward, and present the whole thing before the ruler in this body, the human soul, the king on his throne. Before him, this is presented, and then from him comes the order, do this, or do not do this; and the

order comes down in the same sequence to the intellect, to the mind, to the organs, and the organs order it to the instruments, and the perception is complete.

The instruments are in the external body, the gross body of man; but the mind is not; neither is the intellect. They are what is called, in Hindu philosophy, the finer body, and what, in Christian theology, you read of as the spiritual body of man; finer, very much finer than the body and yet not the soul. The soul is beyond them all. The external body perishes in a few years; any simple cause may disturb it and destroy it. The finer body is not so easily perishable; yet it sometimes degenerates, and at other times becomes strong. We see how, in the old man, the mind loses its strength, how when the body is vigorous, the mind becomes vigorous, how various medicines and drugs have an effect upon it, how everything external acts on it, and how it reacts on the external world. Just as the body has its progress and its decadence, so also the mind has its time of vigour and its time of weakness, and, therefore, the mind is not the soul, because the soul is simple and cannot decay. Nor can it degenerate. How can we know that? How can we know that there is something behind even this mind? Knowledge which is self-illuminating, the germ, the basis of intelligence, cannot belong to dull and dead matter. Never was seen any gross matter which had intelligence in its own essence. No dull or dead matter can illumine itself. It is intelligence that illumines all matter. This hall is here only through intelligence, because, as a hall, its existence will be unknown until some intelligence assists it. This body is not self-luminous; if it were it would be so in a dead man also, neither can mind nor the spiritual body, be self-luminous. It is not the essence of intelligence. That which is self-luminous cannot decay.

That which shines through a borrowed light, its light comes and goes; but that which is light itself, what can make that come and go, decay and become strong again? We see that the moon wanes, and the moon becomes enlightened again, because it shines with the borrowed light of the sun. If a lump of iron is put into fire and made red-hot it begins to throw back light and to shine, but that light will vanish, because it was borrowed. So, decadence is possible only in that light which is borrowed and is not of its own essence.

Now we see that the body, the external shape, has no light in its own essence; it is not self-luminous; it cannot know itself, nor can the mind. How? Because the mind wanes, because it becomes decrepit, because it is vigorous at one time, and weak at another time, because anything and everything can act on, and make it either strong or weak. Therefore the light which shines through the mind is not its own. Whose is it, then? It must belong to that in which it is not a borrowed light, neither reflected, but of its own essence and as such, that knowledge which is the essence of that being can never die, can never decay, can never become stronger or weaker; it is self-luminous; it is luminosity itself. It cannot be that the soul knows, but the soul *is* Knowledge. It cannot be that the soul *has* existence, but the soul *is* existence. It cannot be that the soul *is* happy, but it is happiness itself. That which is happy has borrowed that happiness; it is reflected. That which has knowledge has received that knowledge; it is reflected. That which has relative existence, that existence is not its own, but the reflected existence of some one else. Wherever there is a difference between substance and qualities, these qualities have been reflected upon the substance, but the soul has not knowledge as its quality;

the soul has not existence as its quality; the soul has not blessedness as its quality; these are the essence of the soul.

Again, it may be asked why shall we take that for granted? Why shall we admit that the soul is knowledge, blessedness, existence, self-luminosity, as its essence, and not as borrowed. Just as we have seen that the luminosity of the body is borrowed from the mind—so long as the mind is there, the body is luminous. If the mind goes away it fails. If the mind goes away from my eye, I may look at you all the time and not see you, or if it leaves my ears, you may talk and talk I shall not hear a word; so with all the senses we find that the luminosity of the body is not its own, but borrowed from the mind. Similarly with the mind. It is being acted upon by everything in the external world, and a little molecule will make it change, a little defect somewhere in the brain makes it change. The luminosity of the mind cannot be its own, because we see throughout nature that that which is essential has no change. Only reflected qualities, borrowed qualities, change. But it may be argued why not say that the soul's luminosity, the soul's blessedness, the soul's knowledge, are similarly borrowed? The defect will be, that in that way there will be no limit. From whom was that borrowed? If we say from some other soul, the same question will be asked, from whom was that borrowed also? So at last, we will have to stop at someone with whom the light was not borrowed; to make matters short then, the logical way is to stop at the first link where we get self-luminosity, and proceed no further.

We see then, that this human being is composed first of this external covering, the body. Secondly, the finer body, consisting of mind and intellect, and egoism and sens-

ation. Next, behind them, is the real self of man. We have seen that all the qualities and powers of this gross body are borrowed from the mind, and that the finer body, the mind, borrows its powers and luminosity from the soul, standing behind.

A great many questions now arise about the nature of this soul. If the existence of the soul is drawn from the argument that it is self-luminous, that knowledge, existence, blessedness are its essence, it naturally follows that this soul cannot have been created out of nothing. A self-luminous existence, independent of other existence could never have been the outcome of something which did not exist. We have seen that even the material world did not come out of zero; much less the soul. It always existed, therefore. There was never a time when it did not exist, because if the soul did not exist, where was time? Time is in the soul; it is when the soul reflects its powers on the mind and the mind thinks, that time comes. When there was no soul, certainly there was no thought, and without thought there was no time. How can the soul, therefore, be said to be existing in time, when time itself exists in the soul? It has neither birth nor death, but it is passing through all these various stages. It is manifesting slowly and gradually from lower to higher, and so on, and on. It is expressing its own grandeur, working through the mind on to the body and through the body it is grasping the external world and understanding it. It takes up a body, and uses it, and when that body has failed and is used up, it takes another body, and so on it goes.

Here comes a very interesting question, that question which is generally known as re-incarnation of the soul. Sometimes people get frightened at the very idea, and superstition is so strong that thinking men, even, would rather

believe that they are the outcome of nothing, and then, with the grandest logic, try to deduce the theory that although they have come out of zero, they will be eternal ever afterwards. Those that come out of zero will certainly have to go back to zero. Neither you nor I, nor any one present, have come out of zero, or will go back to zero. We have been existing eternally, and will exist, and there is no power under the sun, or above the sun which can undo your or my existence, or send us back to zero. Now this idea of re-incarnation is not only not a frightening idea, but is the most essential idea for the moral well-being of the human race. It is the only logical conclusion that thoughtful men can arrive at. If you are going to exist in eternity hereafter, it must be that you have existed through eternity in the past; it cannot be otherwise. I will try to answer a few objections that are generally brought against the theory. Although many of you will think they are very silly objections, still we have to answer them for sometimes we find that the most thoughtful men are ready to advance the silliest ideas. Well has it been said that there never was an idea so absurd that it did not find philosophers to defend it. The first objection is, why do we not remember our past? Do we remember all our past here? How many of you remember what you did when you were babies? No one of you remembers your early childhood, and if upon memory depends your existence, then, this very argument proves that you did not exist as babies, because you do not remember. It is simply unmitigated nonsense to say that existence depends on somebody remembering it. Why should we remember the past? That brain is gone, broken to pieces, and a new brain has been manufactured. What has come to this brain is the resultant, the sum-total of the impressions

that have been made in our past, with which the mind has come to inhabit the new body.

I, as I stand here, am the effect, the result, of all the infinite past which is tacked on to me. And why is it necessary for me to remember all the past? And yet such is the power of superstition that these very men will believe they have at one time been monkeys, at another lemurs, but they dare not ask why do we not remember our monkey-birth. When a great ancient sage, a great ancient seer, who came face to face with the truth, a prophet of old, says something, these modern men stand up and say "Oh, he was a fool!" But just use another name; Huxley says it, or Tyndall; then it must be true, and they take it for granted. In place of ancient superstitions they have erected modern superstitions, in place of old popes of religion, they have installed modern popes of science. So, we see that this objection as to memory is not valid, and that is about the only serious objection that is raised against this theory. Although we have seen that it is not necessary for the theory to prove there shall be memory, at the same time, we are in a position to assert that there are instances in this world where this memory comes, and that each one of you, in that life in which you will become free, will get back this memory, and that alone will make you free. Then alone you will find that this world is but a dream; then alone you will really find, realize in the soul of your soul that you are but actors and the world the stage, then alone will the idea of non-attachment come to you with power of thunder, then all this thirst for enjoyment, this clinging on to life, this world, will vanish for ever; then the mind will see clearly as daylight how many times this existed for you, how many millions of times you had fathers and mothers, sons and daughters, husbands and wives, relatives and

friends, wealth and power. They came and they went. How many times were you on the topmost crest of the wave and how many times were you down at the bottom of despair. When memory will bring that to you, then alone will you stand as a hero, and smile when the world frowns upon you. Then alone will you stand up and say "I care not for thee, even though thou be death; what terrors hast thou for me?" Then only will you conquer death, when you know that death has no power over you. This will come to all.

Are there any arguments, any rational proofs for this reincarnation of the soul? So far we have been giving the negative side, showing that opposite arguments, to disprove, are invalid. Are there any positive arguments? There are; and, most valid too. Knowledge will be impossible without reincarnation. Suppose I go into the street and see a dog? How do I know it is a dog? I refer it to my mind, and in my mind are groups of all my past experiences, arranged, pigeon-holed, as it were. As soon as a new impression comes, I take it up and refer it to some of the old pigeon-holes, and as soon as I find other groups of the same impression already existing, I group it with them, and am satisfied. I know it is a dog, because it coincides with impressions already there. When I do not find the cognate of this new experience inside, I become dissatisfied. When, not finding the cognates of an impression, we become dissatisfied, this state of the mind is called "ignorance"; but, when, finding the cognates of an impression already existing, we become satisfied, this is called "knowledge." When one apple fell, men became dissatisfied. Then gradually they found out the group. What was the group they found? That all apples fell, so they called it "gravitation." Now we see that without a fund of already

existing experience, any new experience will be impossible, for there will be nothing to which to refer the new impression. So, if, as some of the European philosophers think, a child comes into the world with what they call *tabula rasa*, such a child will have to go out with a blank tablet, because he will have nowhere to refer his knowledge. So we see knowledge is impossible without a previously existing fund of knowledge. As such, we all have knowledge, and all have come, therefore, with funds of knowledge already. Knowledge can only be got in one way, the way of experience; there is no other way to know. If we have not experienced it here, we must have experienced it elsewhere. How is it that this fear of death is everywhere? A little chicken just out of an egg; an eagle comes, and the chicken flies in fear to its mother. Where did it learn that eagles ate chickens? There is an old explanation; (I should hardly dignify it by such a name). It was called instinct. What makes that little chicken just out of the egg afraid to die? How is it that, as soon as a duckling hatched by a hen comes near water it jumps into the water and swims. It never swam before, or see anybody swim. People say it is instinct. It is a big word, but it leaves us where we were. Let us study this phenomenon of instinct. We have many instincts in ourselves, a hundred sorts. A lady begins to play on a piano. At first she must pay attention to every key she is fingering, and as she goes on and on for months and years, it becomes instinct; it becomes involuntary. That which required the propulsion of the will does not require conscious will at all, but can be done without any conscious will, and this state is what is called instinct. It was first with will, and then comes down beneath will. This is not yet a comlete proof. One half remains. That half is that almost all of these actions which are now instinctive

can be brought back under the control of the will. Each muscle of the body can be brought under control. This is perfectly well known. So the proof is, therefore, complete, by double method of agreement and difference. The proof is complete, that what we now call instinct is degeneration of voluntary actions; therefore, if the analogy must apply to the whole of creation, if all nature is uniform, what is instinct in lower animals, as well as in men, must be the degeneration of will.

Applying the law we found in the case of the macrocosm, that each involution presupposes an evolution, and each evolution an involution, what is instinct therefore? Involved reason. So all this which we call instinct in men or animals, must, therefore, be involved, degenerated voluntary actions and voluntary actions are impossible without experience. Experience started that knowledge, and that knowledge is there. This fear of death, this going into the water and all these involuntary actions in the human being, are the result of past experiences, now become instinct. So far, we have proceeded very clearly, and so far, the latest science is with us. But here comes, one more difficulty. The latest scientific men are coming back to the ancient sages, and as far as they have done so, there is perfect agreement. They admit that each man and each animal is born with a fund of experience, they admit that all these actions in the mind are the result of experience, but what, they ask, is the use of saying that that experience belongs to the soul. Why not say it belongs to the body, and the body alone; why not say it is hereditary transmission? This is the last question. Why not say that all the experience with which I am born is the resultant effect of all the past experience of my ancestors? The sum-total of the experience from the little protoplasm up to the

highest human being is in me, but it has come from body to body in the course of hereditary transmission. Where will the difficulty be? This question is very nice, and we admit some part of this hereditary transmission. How far? As far as furnishing the material. We, by our past actions, conform ourselves to a certain birth in a certain body, and the only suitable material for that body comes from the parents who have made themselves fit to have that soul as their offspring.

The simple hereditary theory takes for granted a most astonishing proposition without any proof, that mental experience can be recorded in matter, that mental experience can be involved in matter. When I look at you, in the lake of my mind there is a wave. That wave subsides, but it remains in fine form, in an impression. We understand that. We understand a physical impression remaining in the body. But what proof is there for assuming that the mental impression can remain in the body, since the body, breaks down? What carries it? Suppose, even, it were possible for each mental impression to remain in the body that an impression, beginning from the first man down to my father had been in my father's body, and is carried down to me. How? By the bioplasmic cell. How can that be possible, because the father's body does not come to the child *in toto*. The same parents may have a number of children; then from this theory of hereditary transmission, where the impression and the impressed are one (that is to say, material) it rigorously follows that, by the birth of every child, the parents must lose a part of their own impressions, or, if the parents should transmit the whole of their impressions, then after the birth of the first child, their minds would be vacuum.

Again, if in the bioplasmic cell the infinite amount of

impressions from all time has entered, where and how is it? This is a most impossible position, and until these physicists can prove how that impression lives in that cell, and where and what they mean by a mental impression sleeping in the physical cell, their position cannot be taken for granted. So far it is clear, then, this impression is in the mind, that the mind comes to take its birth, and re-birth, and that the mind uses the material which is the most proper for it, and that the mind which has made itself fit for only a particular kind of body, until it can get that material, will have to wait. This we understand. The theory then comes to this, that there is hereditary transmission so far as a furnishing the material to the soul. But the soul migrates, manufactures body after body, and each thought we think, each deed we do, each work we work, is left in store for us in fine forms, ready to spring up again and take shape. When I look at you a wave rises in my mind. It dives down, as it were, and becomes finer and finer, but it does not die. It is ready there to start up again as a wave which we call "memory." So all this mass of impressions is in my mind, and when I die the resultant force of all these impressions is upon me. A ball is here, and each one of us takes a mallet in our hands and begins to strike that ball from all sides, the ball goes from point to point in the room, and when it reaches the door it flies out. What will it carry out with it? The resultant of all these blows. That also will be its direction. So, what directs the soul when the body dies? The resultant, the sum-total of all the works it has done, of the thoughts it has thought: and it will go forward with this upon itself. If the resultant is such that it has to manufacture a new body for further experience, it will go to those parents who are ready to supply it with suitable material for that body, and it will

take a new one. Thus from body to body it will go, going to the heavens, and back to the earth, becoming man, or lower or higher. This way it will go on until it has finished its experience, and completed the circle. It then knows its own nature, knows what it is and ignorance vanishes, its powers become manifest, it becomes perfect, no more is there any necessity for the soul to work through physical bodies, no more is there any necessity for it to work through finer, or mental, bodies. It shines in its own light, and becomes free, no more to be born, no more to die.

We will not go now into the particulars of this. But I will bring before you one more point with regard to this theory of reincarnation. It is the one theory that advances the freedom of the human soul. It is the one theory that does not lay the blame of all our weakness upon somebody else, which is a common human fallacy. We do not look at our own faults; the eyes do not see themselves. They see the eyes of everybody else. We human beings are very slow to recognize our own weakness, our own faults, as long as we can lay the blame upon somebody else. Men in general lay all the blame of life on their fellowmen, or, that failing, on God, or conjure up a ghost of a fate, and say it is fate. Where is fate, and who is fate? We reap what we sow. We are the manufacturers of our own fate. None else has the blame, none has the praise. The wind is blowing all the time; those vessels whose sails are unfurled catch it, and go forward on their way. Those which have their sails furled do not catch the wind. Was it the fault of the wind? Is it the fault of the Merciful Father, whose wind of mercy is blowing without ceasing, day and night, whose mercy knows no decay, is it His fault that some of us are happy, and some unhappy? We make our own destiny. His sun shines for the weak as well as

the strong. His wind blows for the saint and the sinner alike. He is the Lord of all, the Father of all, the Merciful, the Impartial. Do you mean to say that He, the Lord of Creation, looks upon little petty things which we do here in the same light as we do? What a degenerate idea of God that would be! We are like little puppies making life and death struggles here, and foolishly thinking that even God Himself will take it as seriously as we do. He knows what the puppies' play means. All these attempts to lay the blame on Him, that He is the punisher, and He is the rewarder, are foolish ideas. He neither punishes any, nor rewards any. His infinite mercy is open to everyone, at all times, in all places, under all conditions, unfailing, unswerving. Upon *us* depends how we use it. Upon us depends how we work it out. Blame neither man, nor God, nor anyone in the world. When you find yourselves suffering, blame yourselves, and try to do better.

This is the only solution of the problem. Those that blame others—and, alas! the number of them is increasing everyday—are generally miserable, with helpless brains, who have brought themselves into that pass, and having come to that through their own mistakes, blame others, but this does not alter their position. It does not serve them in any way. This attempt to throw the blame upon others only weakens them the more. Therefore, blame none for your own faults, stand upon your own feet, and take the whole responsibility upon yourselves. Say "this misery that I am suffering from is my own doing, and that very thing proves that will be undone by me alone." That which I created I can demolish; that which is created by someone else I shall never be able to demolish. Therefore, stand up, be bold, be strong. Take the whole responsibility on your shoulders, know that you are the creator of your

own destiny. All the strength and succour you want is within yourselves. Therefore, make your own future. "Let the dead past bury its dead," the whole infinite future is before you, and always remember that each work, each thought, each act, is laid in store for you, with this hope, that as the bad thoughts and bad works are ready to spring upon you like tigers, so the good thoughts, good deeds, are ready with the power of hundred thousand angels to defend you always and ever.

REALIZATION.

I WILL read to you from another of the Upanishads. This is one of the simplest, but, I think, one of the most poetical. It is called the Katha Upanishad. Some of you, perhaps, have read the translation by Sir Edwin Arnold. In our last we saw that the enquiry which started with the origin of the world, and the creation of the Universe, failed to obtain a satisfactory answer from without, and how it went inward. And this book psychologically takes up that suggestion, questioning into the internal man. They were asking who created the external world, how it came into being, and so forth, and now the question is, what is that in man which makes him live and move, and what becomes of it when the man dies. They had taken up, as it were, the material substance, and tried to follow it out, and at the best they found a personal Governor of the Universe, a human being—it may be immensely magnified, but yet to all intents and purposes a human being. And that cannot be the whole of truth; at best it can only be partial truth. We see this Universe as human beings, and our God is our human explanation of the Universe.

Suppose a cow were philosophical and had religion, it would have a Cow Universe, and a Cow solution of the problem, and it would not be necessary that it should see our God. Suppose cats became philosophers, they would see a Cat Universe and have a cat solution of the problem of the Universe, some Cat ruling the Universe. So we

see from this that our explanation of the Universe is not the whole of the solution. Neither does our conception cover the whole of the Universe. It would be a great mistake to accept that tremendously selfish position which man is apt to take. Such a solution of the Universal problem as we can get from the outside labours under this difficulty, that in the first place the Universe we see is our own particular Universe, our own view of the Reality. The Reality we cannot see through the senses; we cannot take it in; it never can be so. We only know the Universe from the point of view of beings with five senses. Suppose we obtain another sense, the whole Universe must change. Suppose we had a magnetic sense, and it is quite possible that there are millions and millions of varieties of forces in existence which we do not know yet, for which we have no sense or feeling. Our senses are only limited, very limited indeed, and within those limitations, exists what we call our Universe, and our God is the solution of our Universe, but that cannot be the solution of the whole problem. That cannot be; it is nothing, so to say. But man cannot stop. He is a thinking being, and he wants to find a solution which will comprehensively explain all the Universes. He wants to see a world which is at once the world of men and of God, and of all beings possible and impossible, and he wants to find one solution which will explain all phenomena.

We see it will be possible only to find first the Universe where all Universes are one, to find something which, by itself, of a logical necessity must be the background, the material running through all these various planes of existence, whether we apprehend it through the senses or not. If we could possibly find something which we could know as the common property of the lower worlds, as also

of the higher worlds, although we do not see them, but by the sheer force of logic could understand that this must be the basis of all existence, then our problem would approach to some sort of solution, and this solution, therefore, certainly cannot be obtained from the world we see and know, because this is only one view of the whole.

The only hope then lies in penetrating deeply. The early thinkers discovered that the further they were from the centre the more marked were the variation and differentiation, and the nearer they approached the centre the nearer they were to Unity. The nearer we are to the centre of a circle the nearer we are to the common ground in which all the radii meet, and the farther we are from the centre, the more differentiated is our radical line from the others. The external world is farther and farther away from the centre, and so there is no common ground where all the phenomena of existence meet. At best the external world is but one part of the whole phenomenon. There are other parts, the mental phenomenon, the moral phenomenon, the intellectual phenomenon, the various planes of existence, and to take up only one, and find a solution of the whole out of that one, would be simply impossible. We first, therefore, want to find somewhere a centre from which, as it were, all the other planes of existence start, and standing there we will try to find a solution. That is the proposition. And where is that centre? It is inside, internal man. Going deeper and deeper inside they found that there, in the innermost core of the human soul, is the centre of the whole Universe. All the planes come and gravitate towards that one point; there is the common ground, and standing there alone can we find a common solution. So the question who made this world is neither very philosophical, nor does its solution amount to

anything. This Katha Upanishad speaks in very figurative language.

There was, in ancient times, a very rich man, who made a certain sacrifice which required that he who made it should give away everything that he had. Now this man was not very sincere. He wanted to get the fame and glory of having made the sacrifice, which required everything to be given away, and at the same time he was giving things which were of no further use to him—old cows, half dead, barren, with one eye, and lame. Now he had a boy called Nachiketas. This boy saw that his father was not doing what was right, that he was breaking his vow, and he did not know what to say. In India the father and mother are living gods; a child dare not do anything before them, or speak before them, but simply stands. And so the boy approached the father, and because he could not make a direct inquiry he asked him, "Father, to whom are you going to give me? Your sacrifice requires that everything shall be given away." The father became very much vexed. "What do you mean, boy? A father giving away his own son?" The boy asked the question a second and a third time, and then the angry father answered, "Thee I give unto Death" (Yama). And the story goes on to say that the boy went unto Death. There is a god called Yama, the first man who died. He went to heaven and became the governor of all the Pitris: all the good people who die go and live with him for a long time. He is a very pure and holy person (*i.e.*, *yama*), chaste and good and pure is this Yama. The boy went to Yama's world. Even gods are sometimes not at home and so three days this boy had to wait there. After the third day Yama returned.

"O, learned one," says Yama, "you have been waiting

here for three days without food, and you are a guest worthy of respect. Salutation to thee, O Brahman, and welfare to me. I am very sorry I was not at home. But for that I will make amends. Ask three boons, one for each day." And the boy asked, "My first boon is that my father's anger against me may pass away, that he be kind to me and recognise me when you allow me to depart." Yama granted this fully. The next boon was that he wanted to know about a certain sacrifice which took people to heaven. Now we have seen that the oldest idea which we got in the Samhita portion of the Vedas was only about heaven, where they had bright bodies, and lived with the fathers. Gradually other ideas came, but they were not sufficient; there must be something higher than that. Living in heaven would not be very different from life in this world. At best it would be only a very healthy rich man's life, plenty of enjoyment of the senses, plenty of things to enjoy, a sound body which knows no disease. It would be this material world a little more refined, and just as we have seen, there is this difficulty, that this external material world can never solve the problem. So it would be there; no heaven can solve the problem. If this world cannot solve the problem no multiplication of this world can do so, because, we must always remember that matter is only an infinitesimal part of the phenomena of Nature. The vast part of phenomena which we actually see is not matter.

For instance, in every moment of our life how much is your own feeling, how much is thought phenomena, and how much is actual phenomena outside? How much do you feel and touch and see? How vast it is going on with tremendous rapidity. And the sense phenomena is very small compared with the mental phenomena. The heaven

solution commits this mistake; it insists that the whole of phenomena is only in touch, taste, sight, etc., and this idea of heaven where we ought to live with very bright bodies, with the majority did not give full satisfaction. Yet Nachiketas asks as the second boon for some sacrifice through which people might attain to this heaven. There was an idea in the Vedas that these sacrifices pleased the gods and took human beings to heaven, and so forth. Now, in studying all religions you will find it is an undoubted fact that whatever is old becomes holy. For instance, our forefathers in India used to write on birch bark, but in time they learnt how to make paper. Yet the birch bark is still looked upon as very holy. When the utensils in which they used to cook in the most ancient times were improved upon, the old became holy, and nowhere has this idea been more kept up than in India. Old methods which must be nine or ten thousand years old, of rubbing two sticks together to make fire, are still kept up. At the time of sacrifice no other method will do. So with the other branch of the Asiatic Aryans. Their modern descendants still like to preserve fire that comes from lightning, showing that they used to get fire in this way, afterwards learning to obtain it by rubbing two pieces of wood, and when they learnt other customs they kept up the old customs, which then became holy.

So with the Hebrews. They used to write on parchment. They now write on paper, and the other method is very holy. So with all nations, every rite which you now consider holy was simply an old custom, and these sacrifices were of this nature. In course of time, as they found better methods of life, their ideas were much improved, still, these old forms remained, and from time to time they were practised and received a holy significance.

Then a body of men made it their business to carry on these sacrifices. These were the priests, and they speculated on the sacrifices, and the sacrifices became everything to them. The gods came to enjoy the fragrance of the sacrifices, and everything in this world could be got by the power of sacrifices. If certain oblations are made, certain hymns chanted, certain peculiar forms of altars made, the gods can do everything. So Nachiketas asks by what form of sacrifice a man will go to heaven.

Then the third boon comes, and with that the Upanishad proper begins.

" There is this difficulty ; when a man dies some say he is, others that he is not. Instructed by you I desire to understand this."

Yama was frightened. He was very glad to satisfy the other two boons. Now he says, " The gods in ancient times were puzzled on this point. This subtle law is not easy to understand. Choose some other boon, O Nachiketas, do not press me, let me off on this point."

The boy was determined and said, " What thou hast said is true, O Death, that even the gods doubted on this point, and it is no easy matter to understand. But I cannot obtain another exponent like you and there is no other boon equal to this."

Death said, " Ask for sons and grandsons who will live one hundred years, many cattle, elephants, gold and horses. Ask for empire on this earth and live as many years as you like. Or choose any other boon which you think equal to these—wealth and long life. Or be thou a king, O Nachiketas, on the wide earth I will make thee the enjoyer of all desires. Ask for all those desires which are difficult to obtain in this world. These heavenly maidens with chariots and music which are not to be obtained by

men. Let these, which I will give to you, serve you. O Nachiketas, but do not ask me about dying."

Nachiketas said : " These are merely things of a day, O Death, they bear away the energy of all the sense-organs. The longest life even is very short. These horses, chariots dance and song may remain with Thee. Man cannot be satisfied by wealth. Shall we retain wealth when we behold Thee? We shall live only so long as Thou desirest. Only the boon which I have asked is to be chosen by me."

Yama is pleased now, and he says, " Perfection is one thing and enjoyment another, these two having different ends bind a man. He who chooses perfection becomes pure. He who chooses enjoyment misses his true end. Both perfection and enjoyment present themselves to man; the wise man having examined both distinguishes one from the other. He chooses perfection as being superior to enjoyment, but the foolish chooses enjoyment for the benefit of his body. O Nachiketas, having thought upon the things which are desirable or apparently so, thou hast abandoned them." Death then proceeds to teach Nachiketas.

Now we get a very developed idea of renunciations and Vedic morality, that until one has conquered the desire for enjoyment the truth will not shine in him. So long as these vain desires of our senses are making this clamour, as it were, dragging us every moment outward, making us slaves to everything outside, a little bit of colour, a little bit of taste, a little bit of touch, dragging the human soul out, notwithstanding all our pretensions, how can the truth express itself in our hearts?

" That which is to follow never rises before the mind of a thoughtless child deluded by the folly of riches. This

world exists, the other does not, thinking thus they come again and again under my power."

Again, to understand this truth is very difficult. Many, even hearing it continually, do not understand, for the speaker must be wonderful, so must be the hearer. The teacher must be wonderful, so must be the taught. Neither is the mind to be disturbed by vain argument, for it is no more a question of argument, it is a question of fact. We have heard always that there is a path in every religion which insists on our faith. We have been taught to believe blindly. Well, this idea of blind faith is objectionable, no doubt—no doubt it is very objectionable—but analysing it we find that behind it is a very great truth. What they really mean is what we read now. The mind is not to be ruffled by vain arguments, because argument will not bring us to know God. It is a question of fact and not of argument. All argument and reasoning must be based upon certain principles. Without these principles there cannot be any argument. Reasoning is the method of comparison between certain facts which we have already absolutely perceived. If these absolutely preceived facts are not there already, there cannot be any reasoning. Just as it is true in the external sense, why should it not be at the same time true in the internal? The great mistake into which we fall again and again is this, that the external sensations all depend on actual experiences. You are not asked to believe in any assertions, but the rules become established by actual demonstration, not in the form of argument, but by actual perception.

All arguments are based upon certain perceptions. The chemist takes certain things and certain other things are produced. This is a fact; you see it, sense it, and make that the basis on which to build all your chemical

arguments. So with the physicists, so with all other sciences, all knowledge must stand on certain perception of facts, and upon that we have to build our reasoning. But, curiously enough, the vast majority of mankind think, especially at the present time, that there is nothing to be learnt from religion, and religion can only be perceived by vain argument outside. Therefore we read, the mind is not to be disturbed by vain arguments. Religion is a question of fact, not of talk. We have to analyse our own souls and to find what is there. We have to understand it and to realize what is understood. That is religion. No amount of talk will make religion. So the question of whether there is a God or not can never be proved by vain argument, for the arguments are as much on one side as the other. But if there is a God, He is in our own hearts. Have you ever seen Him? Just as the question as to whether this world exists or not has not been decided yet, the fight between the idealists and the realists is eternal. It is a fact, yet we only know that the world exists, goes on. We only change the meaning of the word. So with all the questions of life, we must come back to facts. There are certain facts which are to be perceived, and there are certain religious facts, as in external science, that have to be perceived, and upon them religion will be built. Of course, the extreme claim that you must believe any dogma of a religion is nonsense, degrading to the human mind. That man who asks you to believe anything degrades himself, and, if you believe, degrades you too. The only right that the sages of the world have to tell us anything, is that they have analysed their minds and have found these facts, and if we do the same we will believe, and not before. That is all that is in religion. But you must always take care of this, that as a matter of fact 99·9 per cent. of these

people that go to fight religion have never analysed their minds, have never struggled to get at the facts. So their arguments do not have any weight against religion, any moie than a blind man who cries against the sun, "You are all fools who believe in the sun." That would have no weight with us. So the arguments of these people who have not gone to work to analyse their own minds, yet at the same time try to pull down religion, will have no weight with us.

And this is one great idea to learn and to hold on to this idea of realisation. But this turmoil and fight and difference in religions will only cease when we understand that religion is not in books, neither in temples, nor in the senses. It is an actual perception, and only the man who has actually perceived God and perceived soul, has religion and with every man who has not done that, there is no difference between the highest ecclesiastical giant, who can talk by the volume, and the lowest, most ignorant materialist. We are all atheists; let us confess it. Mere intellectual assent will not make us religious, and it does not. Take a Christian, or a Mohammedan, or the follower of any religion in the world. See the Sermon on the Mount. Any man who truly realised it would be a God immediately, perfect, and yet it is said that there are many millions of Christians in the world. Do you mean to say they are all Christians? What is meant is, that mankind may try at some time to realise that sermon. There is not one in twenty millions—a Christian.

So, in India, there are said to be three hundred millions of Vedantins. If there were one in a thousand who had actually realised religion, this world would be changed in five minutes. We are all atheists, and yet we try to fight the man who tries to confess it. We are all in the dark;

religion is to us a mere nothing, mere intellectual assent, mere talk—this man talks well, and that man evil. This is to us religion, " wonderful methods of joining words, rhetorical powers, and explaining texts of the books in various ways, these are for the enjoyment of the learned, not religion." Religion will begin when that actual realisation in our own souls begins. That will be the dawn of religion! then you will become religious, and then, and then alone, morality will begin. Now we are not much more moral than the animals in the streets. We are only held down by the whips of society. If society said to-day I will not punish you if you go and steal, we should just make a rush for everyone's property. It is the policeman that makes us moral. It is social opinion that makes a great deal of our morality, and really we are little better than the animals. We understand how much this is so, in the secret of our own rooms. So let us not be hypocrites. Let us confess we are not religious and have no right to look down on others. We are all brothers, and we shall be moral, we hope, when we have realised religion.

If you have seen a certain country, a man may cut you to pieces, but you will never in your heart of hearts say you have not seen the country. Extraordinary physical force may compel you to say you have not seen it, but in your own mind you know you have seen it. When you see Religion and God in a more intense sense than you see this external world, nothing will be able to shake your belief. Then will the real faith begin. That is what is meant by the words in your Gospel, " He who has faith even as a grain of mustard seed." Then you will know the truth because you have become the truth, for mere intellectual assent is nothing.

The one idea is, does this realisation exist? That will be the watchword of Vedanta, realise religion, no talking will do, but it is seen with great difficulty. He has hidden Himself inside the atom, the Ancient one who resides in the inmost recess of every human heart. The sages realised him through the power of introspection, and then they got beyond both joy and misery, beyond what we call virtue, beyond what we call vice, beyond our bad deeds, beyond our good deeds, beyond being and non-being, he who has seen Him has seen the Reality. But what then about the idea of heaven? It was the idea of happiness *minus* unhappiness. That is to say, what we want, is all the joys of this life *minus* its sorrows. That is a very good idea, no doubt; it comes naturally; but it is a mistake throughout, because there is no such thing as absolute good, nor any such thing as absolute sorrow.

You have all heard of that very rich man in Rome who learnt one day that he had only about a million pounds left of his property, and said "What shall I do to-morrow?" and forthwith committed suicide. A million pounds was poverty to him, but not to me; that would be more than enough for me all my life. What is joy, and what is sorrow? It is a vanishing quantity, continually vanishing. When I was a child I thought if I could become a cabman that would be the very acme of happiness for me, just to drive about. I do not think so now. To what joy will you cling? This is one point we must all try to understand, and it is one of the last superstitions to leave us. Everyone's pleasure is different. I have seen a man who is not happy unless he swallows a lump of opium every day. He may dream of a heaven where the land is made of opium. It would be a very bad heaven for me. Again and again in Arabian poetry we read of

heaven full of gardens, where rivers run below. I lived in a country much of my life where there is too much water; some villages and a few thousand lives are sacrificed to it every year. So my heaven would not have gardens beneath which rivers flow; I would have dry land where very little rain falls. So with life, our pleasures are always changing. If a young man dreams of heaven, he dreams of a heaven where he will have a beautiful wife. Let that very man become old, and he does not want a wife. It is our necessities which make our heaven; and the heaven changes with the change of our necessities. If we had a heaven where all these things were intensified we should not progress, the heaven desired by those to whom this sense enjoyment is the very end of being and the end of existence. That would be the most terrible curse we could pronounce on the soul. Is this all we can come to? A little weeping and dancing, and then die like a dog. What a curse you will pronounce on the head of humanity when you long for these things! That is what you do when you cry after the joys of this world, for you do not know what joy is. What philosophy insists on is not to give up joys, but to know what joy really is. The Norwegian heaven is a tremendous fighting place, where they all sit before Wodin, and then comes a wild boar hunt, and then go to war and slash each other to pieces. But somehow or other, after a few hours of such fighting the wounds are all healed up, and they go into a hall, where the boar has been roasted, and have a carousal. And then the wild boar is made up again to be hunted the next day. That is quite the same thing, not a whit worse than our ideas; only our ideas are a little more refined. We want to hunt all these wild boars, and get to a place where all the enjoyments will continue, just

as they imagine that the wild boar is hunted and eaten every day, and recovers the next day.

Now philosophy insists that there is a joy which is absolute, which never changes, and therefore that joy cannot be the joys and pleasures we have in this life, and yet it is Vedanta alone that proves that everything that is joyful in this life is a particle of that real joy, because this is the only joy that is. That every moment really we are enjoying the absolute bliss, covered up, misunderstood, caricatured. Wherever there is any blessing, any blissfulness, any joy, even the joy of the thief in stealing from somebody else, it is that absolute bliss coming out through him, only it has become obscured, muddled up, as it were, with all sorts of extraneous circumstances, caricatured, misunderstood, and that is what we call the thief. But to understand that, first we have to go through the negation, and then the positive side will begin. First we have to give up all that is ignorance, all that is false, and then truth will begin for us. When we have grasped the truth these things which we have given up at first will take a new shape and form, will appear to us in a new light, they will all have become deified, this very world. They will have become sublimated, we shall understand them, then in their real light. But to understand them we have first to get a glimpse of truth, and we must give them up first, and then take them back again deified. Therefore we have to give up all our miseries and sorrows, all our little joys. They are but different degrees of happiness or misery as we may call it. "That which all the Vedas declare, which is proclaimed by all penances, seeking which men lead lives of continence, I will tell you in one word—it is 'Om.'" You will find this word "Om" praised very much in the Vedas, and it is held to be very sacred.

Now Yama answers the question—"What becomes of a man when the body dies?" "This Wise One never dies, is never born and it arises from nothing, nothing arises from it. Unborn, Eternal, Everlasting, this Ancient One can never be destroyed with the destruction of the body. If the killer thinks he can kill, or if the killed thinks he is slain, they both do not know the truth, for the Self neither kills nor is killed." A most tremendous position. The one adjective in the first line is "wise" One. As you go on you will find that the ideal of Vedanta is, that all the wisdom, and all the purity are in the soul already—dimly expressed, or better expressed—that is all the difference. The difference between man and man, and all things in the whole creation is not in kind but only in degree. The background, the reality of everyone is that same eternal, ever blessed, ever pure, and ever perfect one. That is the Atman, the soul, in the sinner or the sinless, in the happy or the unhappy, in the beautiful or the ugly, in man or animals, throughout it is the same. He is the Shining One. The difference is caused by the power of expression. To some it is expressed more, in others less, but this difference of expression has no effect upon Him, the Atman. If in his clothing one shows more of his body, and another less, it would not make any difference in the bodies. The difference is in the clothes that cover or do not cover the body. According to the covering, the body and the man, its powers, its purity begin to shine. Therefore we had better remember here also, that throughout the Vedanta philosophy, there is no such thing as good and bad; they are not two different things; the same thing is good or bad and the difference is only in degree, and that we see to be an actual fact. The very thing I call pleasurable to-day, to-morrow under better circum-

stances, I hate, I call it pain. So the difference is only in the degree, the manifestation, not in the thing itself. There is no such thing as that we call good or bad. The fire that warms us, would burn the child; it would not be the fault of the fire. Thus, the soul being pure and perfect, the man who wants to do evil is giving the lie unto himself, he does not know the nature of himself. Even in the murderer the pure soul is there; it dies not. It was his mistake; he could not manifest it; he had covered it up. Nor in the man who thinks that he is killed is the soul killed, it is the eternal, never killed, never destroyed. Infinitely smaller than the smallest, infinitely larger than the largest, yet this Lord of all is present in the depths of every human heart. The sinless, bereft of all misery, see him through the mercy of the Lord; the bodiless, yet living in the body, the spaceless, yet seeming to occupy space, infinite, omnipresent; knowing such to be the soul, the sages never are miserable. This Atman is not to be realised by the power of speech, nor by a vast intellect, nor by the study of the Vedas.

This is a very bold thing. As I told you before, the sages were very bold thinkers, never stopped at anything. You will remember that in India these Vedas are regarded in such a light as the Christians never regarded the Bible. Your idea of revelation is, that a man was inspired by God; but their idea was, that things exist because they are in the Vedas. In and through the Vedas the whole creation has come. All that is called knowledge is in the Vedas. Every word is sacred and eternal, eternal as the created man, without beginning and without end. As it were, the whole of the Creator's mind is in this book. That was the light in which they held the Vedas. Why is this moral? because the Vedas say so. Why is this immoral? because

the Vedas say so, and in spite of that, see these bold men. No, the truth is not to be found by much study of the Vedas. Therefore with whom the Lord is pleased, unto that man He expresses Himself. But then, the question may arise, that will be something like partisanship. So this expression. Those who are evil doers, whose minds are not peaceful, can never know the light. It is those who are true at heart, pure in their deeds, whose senses have become controlled, unto them this Self manifests itself.

Here is a beautiful figure. Picture the Self to be the rider and this body the chariot, the intellect to be the charioteer, mind the reins, and the senses the horses. In that chariot, where the horses are well broken in, where the reins are strong and kept well in the hands of the charioteer (the intellect), that the chariot reaches the goal which is the state of Him the Omnipresent. But where the horses, the senses, are not controlled, nor the reins, the mind, well controlled, that chariot comes to destruction. This Atman in all beings does not manifest Himself to the eyes or the senses, but those whose minds have become purified and refined, they see Him. Beyond all sound, all touch, beyond form, absolute, beyond all taste and touch, infinite, without beginning and without end, even beyond Nature, the unchangeable, he who realises Him, he frees himself from the jaws of death. But it is very difficult. It is, as it were, walking on the blade of a razor; the way is long and perilous, but struggle on, do not despair. "Awake, arise, and stop not till the goal is reached."

Now you see that the one central idea throughout all the Upanishads is that of realisation. A great many questions will arise from time to time, and especially to the modern man. There will be the question of utility, there will be various other questions, but in all we shall find

that we are prompted by our past associations. It is association of ideas that has such a tremendous power in our mind. To those who have always been hearing about a Personal God and the personality of the mind, from their childhood, these ideas, of course, will appear very stern and harsh, but if we listen to them, think of them, for quite a long time, they will become part and parcel of our lives, and will not frighten us any more. The great question that generally rises, of course, is the utility of philosophy. To that there can be only one answer, that if on the utilitarian ground it is good for many men to seek for pleasures, why should not those whose pleasure is in religious speculation seek that? Because sense enjoyments please many, they seek for them, but there may be others whom they do not please, they want higher enjoyment. The dog's pleasure is only in eating and drinking. The dog cannot understand the pleasure of the scientist who gives up everything, and perhaps dwells on the top of a mountain to observe the position of certain stars. The dog may smile at him and think he is a madman. Perhaps this poor scientist never had money enough to marry even; he eats a few bits of bread and drinks water and sits on the top of a mountain. Perhaps this dog laughs at him. But the scientist will say, "My dear dog, your pleasure is only in the senses: you enjoy it; you know nothing beyond it, but for me this is the most enjoyable thing, and if you have the right to seek your pleasure in your own way so have I, in my own way." The mistake is that we want to tie the whole world down to our own place, we want to make our minds the measure of the whole Universe. To you the old sense things are perhaps the greatest pleasure, but, it is not necessary that my pleasure should be the same and when you insist upon that, I differ from you. That is

the difference between the worldly utilitarian and the religionist. The worldly utilitarian says, see how happy I am. I get a little money, but about all these things I do not bother my head. They are too unsearchable, and so I am happy : so far, so good ; good for all of you utilitarians. This world is terrible. If any man gets happiness in any way excepting by injuring his fellow-beings God speed him, but when this man comes to me and says you must do these things, you are a fool if you don't, I say you are wrong, because the very things which are pleasurable to you, if I had to do them I would die. If I had to go after a few handfuls of gold my life would not be worth living! I would die. That is all the answer the religious would make to him. The answer is that religion is only possible for those who have finished these lower things. We must have our experiences, must have our full run. It is only when we have finished this run that the other world opens.

There is a great question that arises in my mind. It is a very harsh thing to say, and yet a fact. These enjoyments of the senses sometimes assume another size and proportion which is very dangerous and tempting. The idea you will always hear ; it was in very old times, in every religion that a time will come when all the miseries of life will cease, only its joys and pleasures will remain and this earth will become a heaven. That I do not believe. This earth of ours will always remain this same world. It is a most terrible thing to say, yet I do not see my way out of it. It is like rheumatism ; drive it from the head, it goes to the legs, drive it from there, it goes to other parts. Whatever you do it is there. So is misery. In olden times people lived in forests, and they ate each other up ; in modern times they do not eat each other's flesh, but they cheat one another. They ruin whole countries and cities

by cheating. That is not much progress, I do not see what you call progress of the world, multiplication of desires. If one thing is obvious to me it is this, that desires bring all misery, the state of the beggar, always begging for something, cannot see anything in a shop without the idea of having it; having, having, everything. The whole life, the life of the thirsty, thirsty beggar, unquenchable thirst of desire. If the power to satisfy our desires is increased in arithmetical progression, the power of desire is increased in geometrical progression. The sum-total of happiness and misery in the world is at least the same throughout. If a wave rises in the ocean, it makes a hollow somewhere. If happiness comes to a man unhappiness comes to some other, or to some animal. Men are increasing and animals are vanishing; we are killing them and taking their land; we are taking all means of sustenance from them. How can we say that happiness is increasing? The strong race eats up the weaker, but do you think that strong race will be very happy? No; they will begin to kill each other. I do not see how it can be. It is a question of fact. On theoretical grounds, also, I see it cannot be.

Perfection is always infinite. We are this infinite already, and we are trying to manifest that infinity. You and I, everyone, is trying to manifest this infinity. So far it is all right. But from this fact some German philosophers tried to make out a very peculiar theory of philosophy—that is manifestation will go on becoming higher and higher till we attain perfect manifestation, till we have become perfect beings. What is meant by perfect manifestation? Perfection means infinity, and manifestation means limit, and so it means that we shall become unlimited limiteds; which is all nonsense. Such a doctrine may

please children; it may be very nice to please children, to give them a comfortable religion, but it is poisoning them with lies, and bad for religion. We must know that this world is a degradation, that man is a degradation of God, and Adam fell. There is no one religion to-day which teaches you that man is not a degradation. We have been degraded down to the animal; now we are going up again, to emerge again, to get away from this bondage, but we shall never be able to manifest the infinite here. We shall struggle hard, and then find it impossible. There will come a time when we shall find that it is impossible to be perfect here, while we are bound by the senses. And then the march back will be sounded.

This is renunciation. We shall have to get out of the scrape as we got in, and then morality and charity will begin. What is the watchword of all ethical codes? Not I, but thou, and this. I is the outcome of the infinite behind, trying to manifest itself on the outside world. This little Me, and the result is I and you. This is the great result that has been obtained, and this little Me will have to go back and join the infinite, its own nature. It will find it has been making a false attempt. It has put its foot into the wheel and will have to get out, and this is being found out every day. Every time you say not me, my brother, but thou, you are trying to go back, and every time you manifest the infinite here you say I, not you. That brings struggles and evils to the world, but after that must begin renunciation, Eternal renunciation. I am dead and gone. Who cares for my life or not? All these vain desires of living here and enjoying this life, and thinking I will live again in some other place; living always in the senses and in sense enjoyments, brings death.

If we are developed animals, the very same argument

can be worked out on the other side; the animals also may be degraded men. How do you know it is not so? You have seen that the proof of evolution is simply this, that you find a series of bodies, one near to the other, from the lowest body to the highest body, but from that argument how can you insist that it is from the lower up, and not from the top down? The argument applies to both sides, and if anything is true, I believe it is going up and down the series repeating itself. How can you have an evolution without an involution going back in the same series in which we came up? However it be, the central idea to which I am referring is there.

Of course I am ready to be convinced the other way, that the infinite can manifest itself, and as to the other idea, that we are going ever and ever in a straight line, I do not believe it; it is too much nonsense to believe. There is no motion in a straight line. If you throw a stone forward, a time will come when it will complete the circle back. Do you not read the mathematical axiom, a straight line infinitely projected becomes a circle? It must be so, only it may vary as to details. So I always cling to the side of the old religious ideas, when I see Christ preach and Buddha preach, and the Vedanta declare, and the Bible declare it, that we must all come to that perfection in time, but by giving up this imperfection. This world is nothing. It is at best only a hideous caricature, a shadow of the reality. All the fools are running to enjoy the senses.

It is easy to run in the senses. It is easier to run in the old groove, eating and drinking, but what these modern philosophers want to tell you is to take these comfortable ideas and put the stamp of religion on them. But that doctrine is not true. Death is in the senses. We must go

beyond death. It is not a reality. Renunciation will take us to the reality. Renunciation is meant by morality. Renunciation is every part of our life, every moment of goodness and real life that we enjoy, is when we do not think of ourselves. I am dead ; the old man is dead ; and then we are in the Real, and the Vedanta says, that reality is God, and He is our own real nature, and He is always in you and with you. Live in Him and stand in Him ; although it seems to be so much harder, it will become easier by-and-bye. You will find that it is the only joyful state of existence ; every other existence is of death. Life on the plane of the spirit is the only life, life on any other plane is mere death ; the whole of this life can be only described as a gymnasium. We must go beyond it to enjoy real life.

THE IDEAL OF A UNIVERSAL RELIGION

HOW IT MUST EMBRACE DIFFERENT TYPES OF MINDS AND METHODS.

WHERESOEVER our senses reach, or our minds can imagine, we find action and reaction of the two forces, one counteracting the other, causing the constant play of these two, the mixed phenomena that we see around us or feel in our mind. In the external world, it is expressing itself in physical matter, as attraction and repulsion, centripetal and centrifugal. In the internal world, it explains the various mixed feelings of our nature, the opposites, love and hatred, good and evil. We repel some things, we attract some things. We are attracted by some one, we are repelled by some one. Many times in our lives we find without any reason whatsoever we, as it were, are attracted towards certain persons; at other times, similarly, mysteriously, we are repelled by others. This is patent to all, and the higher the field of action the more potent, the more remarkable, are the actions of these forces. Religion is the highest plane of human thought, and herein we find that the actions of these two forces have been most marked. The intensest love that humanity has ever known has come from religion, and the most diabolical hatred that humanity has known has come from religion. The noblest words of peace that the world has ever heard have come from men on this plane, and the bitterest denunciation that the world has ever known has sprung from religious men. The higher the object, the

finer the organization, the more remarkable are its actions. So we find that in religion these two forces are very remarkable in their actions. No other human interest has deluged the world so much in blood as religion; at the same time nothing has built so many hospitals and asylums for the poor; no other human influence has taken such care, not only of humanity, but of the lowest animals, as religion. Nothing makes us so cruel as religion, nothing makes us so tender as religion. This has been in the past, and will be in the future. Yet from the midst of this din and turmoil, and strife, and struggling, the hatred and jealousy of religions and sects, from time to time, arise potent voices, crying above all this noise, making themselves heard from pole to pole, as it were, for peace, for harmony. Will it ever come?

Our subject for discussion is, is it possible that there ever should come harmony in this tremendous plane of struggle? The world is agitated in the latter part of this century by questions of harmony; in society, various plans are being proposed, various attempts are made to carry them into practice, but we know how difficult that is. People find it is almost impossible to mitigate the fury of the struggle of life, to tone down the tremendous nervous tension that is in man. Now, if it is difficult to bring harmony and peace and love in this little bit of our life which deals with the physical plane of man, the external, gross, outward side, a thousand times more difficult is it, to bring peace and harmony in that internal nature of man. I would ask you for the time being to come out of the network of words; we are hearing from childhood such words as love and peace and brotherhood and equality and universal brotherhood. But they have become words without meaning, which we repeat like parrots, and it is natural for

us to do so. We cannot help it. Great gigantic souls, who felt in their hearts these great ideas, first manufactured these words, and at that time many understood their meaning. Later, ignorant people take the words and play upon them, and religion becomes a play in their hands, mere frothy words, not to be carried into practice. It becomes "my father's religion," "our nation's religion," "your country's religion," and so forth. It becomes only a phase of patriotism. To bring harmony in religion, therefore, must be most difficult. Yet we will try to study this phenomenon.

We see that in every religion there are three parts—I mean in every great and recognized religion. First there is the philosophy, the doctrines, the ideals of that religion, which embodies the goal, embodies, as it were, the whole scope of that religion, lays before its votaries and followers, the principle of that religion, the way to reach the goal; next that philosophy is embodied in mythology. So the second part is mythology. This mythology comes in the form of lives of men, or of supernatural beings, and so forth. It is the same thing as philosophy made a little more concrete, the abstractions of philosophy become concretized in the lives of men and supernatural beings. The last portion is the ritual. This is still more concrete, forms and ceremonies, various physical attitudes, flowers and incense, and everything that appeals to the senses. In this consists the ritual. You will find that everywhere, recognized religions have all these three. Some lay more stress on one side, some on the other. We will take the first part, philosophy. Is there any universal philosophy for the world? Not yet. Each religion brings out its own doctrines, and insists upon them as being the only real ones. And not only does it do that, but it thinks that the man who does not believe them must go to some horrible place. Some of them will

not stop there; they will draw the sword to compel others to believe as they do. This is not through wickedness, but through a particular disease of the human brain called fanaticism. They are very sincere, these fanatics, the most sincere of human beings, but they are not more responsible than any other lunatics in the world.

This disease of fanaticism is one of the most dangerous of all diseases. All the wickedness of human nature is aroused by it. Anger is stirred up, nerves are strung high, and human beings become like tigers. Is there any similarity, is there any harmony, any universal mythology? Certainly not. Each religion has its own mythology, with only this difference, that each one says "My stories are not mythologies." For instance, take the question home. I simply mean to illustrate it; I do not mean any criticism of any religion. The Christian believes that God took the shape of a dove, and came down, and they think this is history, and not mythology. But the Hindu believes that God is manifested in the cow. Christians say that is mythology, and not history: superstition. The Jews think that if an image be made in the form of a box, or a chest, with an angel on either side, then it is to be placed in the Holy of Holies; it is sacred to Jehovah; but if the image be made in the form of a beautiful man or woman, they say "This horrible idol; break it down!" This is our unity in mythology! If a man stands up and says "My prophet did such and such a wonderful thing," others say that is superstition; but their prophet did a still more wonderful thing; they say that this is historical. Nobody in the world as far as I have seen is able to find out the fine distinction between history and mythology in the brains of these gentlemen. All these stories are mythological, mixed up with a little history.

Next come the rituals. One sect has one particular form of ritual, and thinks that is the holy form, and that the rituals of another sect are simply arrant superstition. If one sect worships a peculiar sort of symbol, another sect says "Oh, it's horrible." Take for instance the most general form of symbol. The Phallas symbol is certainly a sexual symbol, but gradually that part of it was forgotten, and it stands as a symbol of the Creator. Those nations which have this as their symbol, never think of it as the Phallas; it is just a symbol, and there it ends. But a man from another race sees in it nothing but the Phallas, and begins to condemn it, yet at the same time may be doing something that to the Phallic worshipper appears most horrible. I will take two points, the Phallas symbol and the sacrament of the Christians. To the Christians the Phallas is horrible, and to the Hindus the Christian sacrament is horrible. They say that the Christian sacrament, the killing of a man and eating his flesh and blood to get the good qualities of that man, is cannibalism. This is what some of the savage tribes do; if a man is brave they kill him and eat his heart, because they think it will give them the qualities of bravery possessed by that man. Even such a devout Christian as Sir John Lubbock admits this, and says the origin of this symbol is in this savage idea. The Christians generally do not admit this idea of its origin; and what it may imply never comes to their minds. It stands for a holy thing, and that is all they want to know. So even in rituals there is no universal symbol, which can lead to general recognition. Where, then, is this universality? How is it possible then to have a universal form of religion? That already exists.

We all hear about universal brotherhood, and how

societies stand up and want to preach this. I remember an old story. In India, wine drinking is considered very horrible. There were two brothers who wanted to drink some wine, secretly, in the night, and their uncle, who was a very strongly old-fashioned man, was sleeping in a room quite near where they were going to have their drinking. So before they began to drink, each one said to the other, "Silence? uncle will wake up." As they went on drinking, they began to *shout* to each other, "Silence! uncle will wake up." So, as the shouting increased, uncle woke up, and he came into the room, and found out the whole thing. Universal brotherhood, "we are all equal, therefore make a sect." As soon as you make a sect you protest against equality, and thus it is no more. Mohammedans say universal brotherhood, but what comes in reality? Nobody who is not a Mohammedan will be admitted; he will have his throat cut. The Christians say universal brotherhood; but any one who is not a Christian must go to that place and be eternally barbecued.

So we are being carried on in this world after universal brotherhood and equality, universal equality of property and thought, and everything. And I would simply ask you to look askance, and be a little reticent, and take a little care of yourselves when you hear such talk in this world; behind it many times comes intensest selfishness. "In the winter sometimes a cloud comes; it roars and roars, but it does not rain; but in the rainy season the clouds speak not, but deluge the world with water." So those who are really workers, and really feel the universal brotherhood of man, do not talk much, do not make little sects for universal brotherhood, but their acts, their whole body, their posture, their movements, their walk, eating, drinking, their whole life, show that brotherhood for man-

kind, that love and sympathy for all. They do not speak, they do. This world is getting full of blustering talk. We want a little more work, and less talk.

So far we see that it is hard to find any universal ideas in this, and yet we know they exist. We are all human beings, but are we all equal? Certainly not. Who says we are equal? Only the man who is a lunatic; he alone can say we are all equal. Are we all equal in our brains, in our powers, in our bodies? One man is stronger than another, one man has more brain power than another. If we are all equal, why is this inequality? Who made it? We. Because we have more or less powers, more brain, more physical strength; it must make a difference. Yet we know that the doctrine appeals to us. Take another case. We are all human beings here, but there are some men, and some women. Here is a black man, there a white man, but all are men, all humanity. Various faces; I see no two faces here the same, yet we are all human beings. Where is this humanity? I cannot find it. When I try to analyse it, I do not find where it is. Either I find a man or a woman; either dark or fair; and among all these faces, that abstract humanity which is the common thing, I do not find when I try to grasp, to sense, and actualize it, and think of it. It is beyond the senses; it is beyond thought, beyond the mind. Yet I know, and am certain it is there. If I am certain of anything here, it is this humanity which is a common quality among all. And yet I cannot find it. This humanity is what you call God. "In Him we live and move and have our being." In Him and through Him we have our being. It is through this I see you as a man or a woman, yet, when I want to catch or formulate it, it is nowhere, because it is beyond the senses, and yet we know that in it, and through it, everything exists.

So with this universal one-ness and sympathy, this universal religion which runs through all these various religions as God; it must and does exist through eternity. "I am the thread that runs through all these pearls," and each pearl is one of these sects. They are all the different pearls, but the Lord is the thread that runs through all of them, only the majority of mankind are entirely unconscious of it; yet they are working in it, and through it; not a moment can they stand outside it, because all work is only possible through and in it; yet we cannot formulate it, it is God Himself.

Unity in variety is the plan of the universe. Just as we are all men, yet we are all separate. As humanity I am one with you, and as Mr. So-and-so I am different from you. As a man you are separate from the woman; as a human being you are one with the woman. As a man you are separate from the animal, but as a living being, the man, the woman, the animal, the plant, are all one, and as existence, you are one with the whole universe. That existence is God, the ultimate Unity in this universe. In Him we are all one. At the same time, in manifestation, these differences must always remain. In our work, in our energies that are being manifested outside, these differences must remain always. We find then that if by the idea of a universal religion is meant one set of doctrines should be believed by all mankind, it is impossible, it can never be, any more than there will be a time when all faces will be the same. Again, if we expect that there will be one universal mythology, that is also impossible, it cannot be. Neither can there be one universal ritual. This cannot be. When that time will come, this world will be destroyed, because variety is the first principle of life. What makes us formed beings? Differentiation. Perfect balance will be destruction. Suppose the

amount of heat in this room, whose tendency is perfect diffusion, gets that diffusion, that heat will cease to be. What makes motion in this universe? Lost balance. That is all. That sort of unity can only come when this universe will be destroyed, but in the world such a thing is impossible. Not only so, it is dangerous. We must not seek that all of us should think alike. There would then be no thought to think. We would be all alike, like Egyptian mummies in a museum, looking at each other without thought to think. It is this difference of thought this differentiation, losing of the balance of thought, which is the very soul of our progress, the soul of thought. This must always be.

What then do I mean by the ideal of a universal religion? I do not mean a universal philosophy, or a universal mythology, or a universal ritual, but I mean that this world must go on wheel within wheel, this intricate mass of machinery, most intricate, most wonderful. What can we do? We can make it run smoothly, we can lessen the friction, we can grease the wheels, as it were. By what? By recognizing variation. Just as we have recognized unity by our very nature, so we must also recognize variation. We must learn that truth may be expressed in a hundred thousand ways, and each one yet be true. We must learn that the same thing can be viewed from a hundred different standpoints, and yet be the same thing. Take for instance the sun. Suppose a man standing on the earth looks at the sun when it rises in the morning; he sees a big ball. Suppose he starts towards the sun and takes a camera with him, taking photographs at every stage of his journey, at every thousand miles he takes a fresh photograph, until he reaches the sun. At each stage, each photograph was different from the other photographs; in fact when he gets

back he brings with him so many thousands of photograph of so many different suns, as it were, and yet we know it was the same sun photographed by the man at every stage of his progress. Even so with the Lord. Greater or less, through high philosophy or low, through the highest or lowest doctrines, through the most refined mythology or the most gross, through the most refined ritualism or the grossest, every sect, every soul, every nation, every religion consciously or unconsciously, is struggling upward, Godward and each vision is that of Him and of none else. Suppose we each one of us go with a particular pot in our hand to fetch water from a lake. Suppose one has a cup, another a jar, another a bigger jar, and so forth, and we all fill them. When we take them up, the water in each case has got into the form of the vessel. He who brought the cup, has water in the form of a cup, he who brought the jar, his water is in the shape of a jar, and so forth; but, in every case, water, and nothing but water is in the vessel. So, in the case of religion, our minds are like these little pots, and each one of us is seeing God. God is like that water filling these different vessels, and in each vessel the vision of God comes in the form of the vessel. Yet He is one. He is God in every case. This is the recognition that we can get.

So far it is all right theoretically, but is there any way of practically working it out? We find that this recognition that all these various views are true, has been very, very old. Hundreds of attempts have been in India, in Alexandria, in Europe, in China, in Japan, in Tibet, latest in America, in various countries attempts have been made to formulate a harmonious religious creed to make all come together in love, instead of fighting. And yet they have all failed. Because there was no practical plan. They

admitted that all these religions were right, but they had nó practical way of bringing them together, and yet keeping that individuality. That plan alone will be practical, which does not destroy the individuality of any man in religion, and at the same time shows him a point of union. But so far, all these plans that have been tried, while proposing to take in all these various views, have, in practice, tried to bring them down to a few doctrines, and so have produced merely a fresh sect, fighting, struggling and pushing.

I have also my little plan. I do not know whether it will work or not and I want to present it to you for discussion. What is my plan? In the first place I would ask mankind to recognize this maxim—"Do not destroy." Iconoclastic reformers do no good to the world. Break not anything down, but build. Help, if you can; if you cannot, fold your hands and stand by, and see things go on. Do not injure, if you cannot help. Therefore destroy not, say not a word against any man's convictions so far as they are sincere. Secondly, take man where he stands, and from thence give him a lift. If the theory be right, that God is the centre, and each one of us individuals is moving along one of the lines of the radii, it is then perfectly true that each one of us must come to the centre; and at the centre, where all these radii meet, all differences will cease, but until we have come there differences must be. And yet all these radii converge to the same centre. One of us is by nature travelling in one of these lines, and another in another, and so we only want a push along the line we are in, and we will come to the centre, because "all roads lead to Rome." Therefore, destroy not. Each one of us is naturally developing according to our own nature; each nature will come to the highest truth, and men must teach them-

selves. What can you and I do? Do you think you can teach even a child? You cannot. A child teaches himself. Your duty is to remove the obstacles. A plant grows. Do you make the plant grow? Your duty is to put a hedge round, and see that no animal eats up the plant, and there it ends. The plant must grow itself. So in the spiritual growth of every man. None can teach you; none can make you spiritual; you have to teach yourselves? the growth must come from inside, not out.

What can an external teacher do? He can remove the obstructions a little, and there his duty ends. Therefore help, if you can, but do not destroy. Give up all such ideas that you can make men spiritual. It is impossible. There is no other teacher but your own soul. Admit this. What comes? In society we see so many various natures of mankind. There are thousands and thousands of varieties of minds and inclinations. A practical generalization will be impossible, but for my purpose I have sufficiently characterized them into four. First the active working man; he wants work; tremendous energy in his muscles and his nerves. He likes to work, build hospitals, do charitable works, make streets, and do all sorts of work, planning, organizing; an active man. There is then the emotional man, who loves the sublime and the beautiful to an excessive degree. He wants to think of the beautiful, the mild part of nature, Love, and the god of Love, and all these things he likes. He loves with his whole heart those great souls of ancient times, the prophets of religions, the incarnations of God on earth; he does not care whether reason can prove that Christ existed, or Buddha existed; he does not care for the exact date when the Sermon on the Mount was preached, or the exact moment of Christ's birth; what he cares for is His personality, the figure be-

fore him. He does not even care whether it can be proved that such-and-such men existed or not. Such is his ideal. Such a nature as I have pictured, is the lover; he is the emotional man. Then again there is the mystic man, whose mind wants to analyse its own self, understand the workings of the human mind, the psychology, what are the forces that are working inside, how to manipulate and know and get control over them. This is the mystical mind. There is then the philosopher, who wants to weigh everything, and use his intellect even beyond the philosophy.

Now a religion to satisfy the largest portion of mankind, must be able to supply food for all these various minds, and this is wanting, the existing sects are all one-sided. You go to one sect. Suppose they preach love and emotion. They begin to sing and weep, and they preach love and all sorts of good things in life, but as soon as you say "My friend, that is all right, but I want something stronger than that; give me an ounce of reason, a little philosophy; I want to handle things more gradually." "Get out," they say, and they not only say get out, but want to send you to the other place, if they can. The result is that sect can only help people of an emotional mind, and none else; others, they not only do not help, but try to destroy, and the most wicked part of the whole thing is that they will not only not help others, but do not believe that they are sincere, and the sooner they get out the better. There is the failing of the whole thing. Suppose you are in a sect of philosophers, talking of the mystic wisdom of India and the East, and all these big psychological terms fifty syllables long, and suppose a man like me, a common everyday man, goes there and says "Can you tell me anything to make me spiritual?" The first thing they do is to smile and say "Oh, you are too far below us in reason

to exist! What do you know of spirituality?" They are high up philosophers. They show you the door. Then there are the mystical sects, who are talking all sorts of things about different planes of existence, different states of mind, and what the power of the mind can do, and if you are an ordinary man and say "Show me anything good that I can do; I am not given much to that sort of speculation; can you give me anything that fits me?" they will smile, and say "Look at that fool; he is nobody; the only thing we advise you to do is to commit suicide; your existence is for nothing." And this is going on in the world. I would like to get extreme exponents of all these different sects, and shut them up in a room, and photograph that beautiful derisive smile of theirs.

This is the existing human nature, the existing condition of things. What I want to propose, is a religion that will be equally acceptable to all minds; it must be equally philosophic, equally emotional, equally mystic, and equally active. If your professors from the colleges come, your scientific men and physicists, they will want reason. Let them have it as much as they want. There will be a point where they will all give up, and say, "Go not beyond this." If they say "Give up this thing, it is superstitious, these ideas of God and salvation are superstition," I say "Mr. Philosoper, this is a bigger superstition, this body. Give *it* up, don't go home to dinner or your philosophic chair. Give up the body, and if you cannot, cry quarter, and sit down there." In religion there must be that side, and we must be able to show how to realize the philosophy which teaches that this world is one, that there is but one existence in the universe. Similarly, if the mystic comes, we must be ready to show him the science of mental analysis, practically demonstrate it before him. Here you are, come,

learn, nothing is "done in a corner." And if emotional people come we will sit with them and weep and weep in the name of the Lord; we will "drink the cup of love and become mad." If the worker comes we will go and work with him, work with all the energy that he has. And this will be the ideal of the nearest approach to a universal religion. Would to God that all men were so harmoniously blended that in their minds all these various elements of philosophy, of mysticism, of emotion and work were present; and yet that is the ideal, my ideal, of a man. Every one who has only one or two of these, I call "one-sided," and that is why this world is almost full of these "one-sided" men, with only one road in which they can move, and anything else is dangerous and horrible to them. The attempt to help mankind to become wonderfully balanced in these four directions, is *my* ideal of religion. And this religion is what we in India call "Yoga," union between God and man, union between the lower self and the higher self. To the worker, it is union between men and the whole of humanity. To the mystic between his lower and higher self. To the lover, union between him and the God of love, and to the philosopher it is union of all existence. This is what is meant by Yoga. This is a Sanskrit term, and these four divisions in Sanskrit have different names. The man who seeks after this union is called Yogi. The worker is called Karma Yogi; he who seeks it through love is called Bhakti Yogi, he who seeks it through mysticism is called Raja Yogi; and he who seeks it through philosophy is called Gnana Yogi. So this word Yoga comprises them all.

Now first of all I will take up Raja Yoga. What is this Raja Yoga, controlling the mind? In this country you are associating all sorts of hobgoblins with the word Yoga. I am afraid, therefore, I must start by telling you

that it has nothing to do with such things. No one of these Yogas gives up reason, no one of them asks you to deliver your reason, hoodwinked, into the hands of priests, of any type whatever. No one of them asks that you give your allegiance to any superhuman messenger. Each one of them tells you to cling to your reason to hold fast to reason. We find in all beings three sorts of instruments of knowledge. The first is the instinct, which you find mostly in animals, and to some degree in man, the lowest instrument of knowledge. What is the second instrument of knowledge? Reasoning. You find that mostly in men. Now in the first place instinct is insufficient; as you see in the animals, the sphere of their action is very limited, and within that limit instinct acts. When it comes in man, it is developed into reason. The sphere has become enlarged. Yet it is still very insufficient. It can get only a little way and then it stops. There it tells us it cannot go any further, and if you want to push it any further, the result is helpless confusion; reason itself becomes unreasonable. The whole of logic becomes an argument in a circle. Take for instance the very basis of our perception, matter and force. What is matter? That which is acted upon by force. And force? That which acts upon matter. You see the complication, what the logicians call see-saw, one idea depending on the other, and that also depending on this one. You find a tremendous wall before the reason, beyond which reasoning cannot go; yet it wants to get into the infinite beyond. This world of ours, this universe which our senses feel, or our mind thinks of, is but one bit of the infinite which has been projected into the plane of conciousness, and within that little limit which has been caught in the network of consciousness works our reason, and not beyond. Therefore there must be some other instrument to take us beyond, and that instrument

is called inspiration. So instinct, reason and inspiration are the three instruments of knowledge. Instinct belongs to the animals, reason to men, and inspiration to God-men. But in all human beings are the germs of these three instruments of knowledge. They have got to be evolved, but they must be there. This must be remembered—that one is the development of the other, and therefore does not contradict the other. It is reason that develops into inspiration, and therefore inspiration does not contradict reason, but fulfils. Things which reason cannot get are brought to light by inspiration, but do not contradict reason. The old man does not contradict the child, but fulfils the child. Therefore you must always remember this—that the great danger lies here:—Many times instinct is presented before the world as inspiration, and then come all the spurious claims. A fool or semi-lunatic thinks the jargons going on in his brain are inspirations, and he wants men to follow him. The most contradictory, irrational nonsense has been preached in the world, simply the instinctive jargon of lunatic brains trying to pass for inspiration.

The first test must be that it must not contradict reason. So, you see this is the basis of all these Yogas. We take the Raja Yoga, the psychological Yoga, the psychological way to union. It is a vast subject, and I will only point out to you the central idea of this Yoga. There is one method in all knowledge that we have. From the lowest to the highest, from the smallest worm to the highest Yogi, they have to use the same method, and that method is called concentration. The chemist who is working in his laboratory has concentrated all the powers of his mind, and brought them into one focus, and thrown them on the elements, and they

stand analysed, and his knowledge comes. The astronomer has concentrated the thoughts of his mind, and brought them into one focus, and he throws them through his telescope, and stars and systems roll forward and give up their mysteries to him. So in every case—the professor in his chair, the student with his book, every man who is working. You are hearing me, and if my words interest you your mind will be concentrated, and suppose a clock strikes or something happens you will not hear it on account of this, and the more you are able to concentrate your mind the better you will understand me, and the more I concentrate my love and powers the better I will be able to tell you what I want to convey, and the more this power of concentration is in the mind the more knowledge it can get, because this is the one and only method of knowledge. Down to the lowest shoeblack, if he has more concentration he will black shoes better, the cook will cook a meal better. In making money or in worshipping God, or doing anyting, the stronger the power of concentration, the better will that work be. This is the one call, the one knock which opens the gates of Nature and lets out the floods of light. This is the only key, the one power—concentration. This system of Raja Yoga deals almost exclusively with this. In the present state of our body we are so much distracted, the mind is frittering away its energies upon a hundred sorts of things. As soon as I try to calm my thoughts and concentrate my mind upon one object of knowledge, thousands of thoughts rush into the brain, thousands of thoughts rush into the mind and disturb it. How to check that, bring it under control, this is the whole of subject of study in Raja Yoga.

We take the next, Karma Yoga, that of work. It is evident in society how there are so many persons who like

some sort of activity, whose mind cannot be concentrated upon the plane of thought alone, and who have but one idea, concretised in work, visible and tangible. Yet there must be a science of that too. Each one of us is working, but the majority of us fritter away the greater portion of our energies, because we do not know the secret of work. Where to work and how to work is the secret, how to employ the most part of our energies, how to bring them all to bear on the work that is before us; and along with that comes the other great objection with all work—work must cause pain, and all misery and pain come from attachment. I want to do work, I want to do good to a human being, and it is 90 to 1 that that human being that I have helped will be ungrateful, and go against me, and the result is pain. That will deter mankind from working, and spoil a good portion of their work and of the energy of mankind, this fear and this misery. Karma Yoga teaches how to work for work's sake, unattached, without caring who is helped, and what for. The Karma Yogi works through his own nature, because it is good to work, and has no object beyond that. His station in this world is that of a giver, and he never receives. He knows that he is giving, and does not ask anything back, and therefore he eludes the grasp of misery. The grasp of pain which comes, is the reaction from "attachment."

There is then Bhakti Yoga, for the emotional nature, the lover. He wants to love God, he wants all sorts of rituals, flowers, and incense, beautiful buildings, forms and all these things. Do you mean to say they are wrong? One fact I will tell you. It is better for you to remember, in this country especially, that spiritual giants have been only produced by those sects which have got a very rich

mythology and ritual. All those sects who wanted to worship God without any form or ceremony, crushed without mercy everything that was beautiful and sublime. Their religion becomes a fanaticism at best, a dry thing. The history of the world is a standing witness to this fact. Therefore, do not decry these rituals and these mythologies. Let people have them; let those who desire go through them. Neither have that little derisive smile,—"They are fools; let them have it." Not so; the greatest men I have seen in my life, the most wonderfully developed, have all come from these rituals. I do not hold myself worthy to stand at their feet. For me to criticise them! How do I know how these ideas act upon the human mind, what to accept and what to reject? We go on criticising everything in the world. Therefore let them have it. Let people have all the mythology they want, all the beautiful inspirations they want, for you must always know that these emotional natures do not care for your definition of the truth. God to them is something tangible, the only thing that is real; they feel, hear and see it, and love it; they do not stop to analyse it. Your rationalist seems to be like that fool, who, when he saw a beautiful statue, wanted to break it to pieces to see the material it was made of. Let them have God. Bhakti Yoga teaches them how to love, how to love without any ulterior motives, loving good for good's sake, and not for going to heaven, for instance, to get a child, or wealth, or anything else. It teaches them that love itself is the highest recompense of love. The old doctrine that God himself is love. It teaches him to give all sorts of tribute to God as the Creator, the Omnipresent, the Omnipotent, Almighty, Ruler, the Father or Mother, the highest word that can be said of Him, the highest idea that the human mind can construe about Him is that He is

the God of Love. Wherever there is love, it is He. "Wherever there is any love it is He, the Lord present there." Where the husband kisses the wife, He is there in the kiss; where the mother kisses the child, He is there; friends clasp their hands, He, the Lord, is there present, standing as the God of Love. When a great man wants to help mankind, He is there giving it as love to mankind. Wherever the heart expands, He is there manifested. This is what the Bhakti Yoga teaches.

We lastly come to the Gnana Yogi, the philosopher, the thinker, he who wants to go beyond. He is the man who is not satisfied with the little things of this world. His idea is to go beyond the routine work of eating, drinking and so on; not even the teaching of thousands of books will satisfy him. Not even the sciences will satisfy him; they only bring this little world, at best, before him. What else? Not even whole systems, the Milky Way, the whole universe will satisfy him; that is only a drop in the ocean of existence. His soul wants to go beyond all that into the very heart of being, by seeing reality as it is; by realizing it, being it, by becoming one with the Universal Being. That is the philosoper, to whom God is not only the Father or Mother, not only the Creater of this Universe, its Protector, its Guide; these are but little words for him. For him God is the life of his life, and soul of his soul. God is his own Self. Nothing remains to him. All the mortal parts have been pounded by the ways of philosophy, and brushed away. What remains is God himself.

Upon the same tree there are two birds, one on top, the other below. The one on the top is calm and silent, majestic, immersed in its own glory; the one below, on the lower branches, eating sweet and bitter fruits by turns, hopping from branch to branch and becoming happy and

miserable by turns. After a time the lower bird ate an exceptionally bitter fruit, and got disgusted and looked up, and there was the other bird, that wondrous one of golden plumage. He eats not, neither sweet nor bitter. Neither is he happy nor miserable, but calm, the self-centred one, nothing beyond his self. But the lower bird forgot it, and again began to eat the sweet and bitter fruits of that tree. In a little while another exceptionally bitter fruit comes; he feels miserable, looks up, and goes forward, and wants to get nearer to the upper bird. Again he forgets and again looks up, and so he goes on. After a while an exceptionally bitter fruit comes; again he looks up, and comes nearer, and nearer, and nearer; the reflections of light from the plumage of that bird play around his own body, and he changes and seems to melt away; still nearer he comes everything melts away, and at last he finds the change. The lower bird was only the shadow, the reflection; he, himself, was the upper bird all the time. This eating of fruits sweet and bitter, this lower little bird, weeping and happy by turns, was a vain chimera, a dream, the real bird was there calm and silent, glorious and majestic; beyond grief, beyond sorrow. The upper bird is God, the Lord of this universe, and the lower bird is the human soul, eating the sweet and bitter fruits of this world, and then comes a blow. For a time he stops and goes toward the unknown for a moment, and a flood of light comes. He thinks this world is vain. He goes a little further, yet again the senses drag him down, and he begins to eat the sweet and bitter fruits of the world. Again an exceptionally hard blow comes. He becomes open again; thus he approaches and approaches, and as he gets nearer and nearer he finds his old self melting away, and that he is God. When he has come near enough he finds "He whom

I have preached to you as the life of this universe, who is present in the atom, who is present in the big suns and moons, He is the basis of our own life, the background of our soul. Nay, thou art that." That is what this Gnana Yoga teaches. It tells man he is the essentially divine. It shows to mankind the real unity of being; that each one of us is the Lord God himself, manifested on earth. Each one of us, from the lowest worm that crawls under our feet to the highest beings at whom we look with awe, all these are manifestations of the same Lord.

Then again, all these various Yogas, have to be carried out into practice; theories will not do. First we have to hear, then we have to think; reason it out, impress it in our mind; and lastly, we have to meditate upon it, realize it, until it becomes our whole life. No more it remains as ideas or as theories; it comes into our Self. Religion is realization, not talk, nor doctrine, nor theories, however beautiful they may be. It is being and becoming, not hearing or acknowledging; it is not an intellectual assent, but the whole nature becoming changed into it. That is religion. By intellectual assent we can come to a hundred sorts of foolish things, and change next day, but this being and becoming is what is religion.

GOD IN EVERYTHING.

WE have seen how the greater portion of our life must of necessity be filled with evils, however we may resist, and that this mass of evil is practically almost infinite for us. We have been struggling to remedy this since the beginning of time, yet all remains very much the same. The more we discover remedies the more we find subtle evils existing in the world. We have also seen that all religions propose a God, as the one way of escaping these difficulties. All the religions tell us that if you take the world as it is, as most practical people would advise us to do in this age, then nothing would be left to us but evil. But religions assert that there is something beyond this world. This life in the five senses, life in the material world, is not all that we have, it is only a small portion, and merely superficial. Behind and beyond is the Infinite, where there is no more evil, which some people call God, some call Allah, some Jehovah, Jove, and so on. The Vedantin calls it Brahman. Yet we have to live.

The first impression of the advice given by religions is that we had better terminate our existence. The question is how to cure the evils of life, and the answer apparently is, give up life. It reminds one of the old story. A mosquito settled on the head of a man, and a friend, wishing to kill the mosquito, gave it such a blow, that he killed both man and mosquito. The remedy seems to suggest a similar course of action. Life is full of ills, the world is full of evil; that is a fact no one who is old enough to know the world can deny.

But what is the remedy proposed by all the religions? That this world is nothing. Beyond this world is something which is very real. And here is the real fight. The remedy seems to destroy everything. How can that be a remedy? Is there no way out? Here is another remedy proposed. The Vedanta says that what all the religions advance is perfectly true, but it should be properly understood. Often it is misunderstood, and the religions are not very explicit and not very clear. What we want is head and heart together. The heart is great indeed; it is through the heart that come the great inspirations of life. I would a hundred times rather have a little heart and no brain, than be all brains and no heart. Life is possible, progress is possible, for him who has heart, but he who has no heart and only brain dies of dryness.

At the same time we know that he who is carried along by his heart alone has to undergo many ills, for now and then he is liable to fall into pits. The combination of heart and head is what we want. I do not mean that a man should have less heart or less brain, and make a compromise, but let everyone have an infinite amount of heart and feeling, and at the same time an infinite amount of reason.

Is there any limit to what we want in this world? Is not the world infinite? There is room for an infinite amount of feeling, and so also for an infinite amount of culture and reason. Let them all come together without any limit, let them be running together, as it were, in parallel lines each with the other.

So most of the religions understand the fact, and state it in very clear and precise language, but the error into which they all seem to fall is the same; they are carried away by the heart, the feelings. There is evil in the

world; give up the world: that is the great teaching, and the only teaching, no doubt. Give up the world. There cannot be two opinions that everyone of us to understand the truth has to give up error. There cannot be two opinions that everyone of us in order to have good must give up evil; there cannot be two opinions that everyone of us to have life must give up what is death.

And yet, what remains to us, if this theory involves giving up the life of the senses, life as we know it, and what we mean by life? If we give up all this, nothing remains.

We shall understand this better, when, later on, we come to the more philosophical portions and discussions of the Vedanta. But for the present I beg to state that in the Vedanta alone we find a rational solution of the problem. Here I can only state to you what the Vedanta wants to teach, and that is, the deification of the world.

The Vedanta does not, in reality, denounce the world. The ideals of renunciation nowhere attain such a climax as in the teachings of the Vedanta, but, at the same time, dry, suicidal advice is not intended, it really means deification of the world—give up the world as we think of it, as we seem to know it, as it is appearing, and know what it really is. Deify it; it is God alone, and, as such, we read at the commencement of the oldest of the Upanishads, the very first book that was ever written on the Vedanta—"Whatever exists in this Universe, whatever is there, is to be covered with the Lord."

We have to cover everything with the Lord Himself, not by a false sort of optimism, not by blinding our eyes to the evil, but by really seeing God inside everything. Thus we have to give up the world, and when the world is given up, what remains? God. What is meant? You can

have your wives; it does not mean that you are to abandon them, and leave them to go away, but that you are to see God in the wife. Give up your children; what does that mean? Take your children and throw them into the street, as some human brutes do in every country? Certainly not. That is diabolism; it would not be religion. But see God in your children. So in everything. In life and in death, in woe or in joy, in misery or in happiness, the whole world is full of the Lord. Open your eyes and see Him. That is what Vedanta says. Give up the world which you have conjectured, because your conjecture was based upon very partial experience, your conjecture was based upon very poor reasoning, your conjecture was based upon your own weaknesses. Give that up; the world we have been thinking of so long, the world to which we have been clinging so long, is a false world of our own creation. Give that up; open your eyes and see that, as such, it never existed; it was a dream, Maya. What existed was the Lord Himself. It is He in the child, He in the wife, and He in the husband, He in the good, and He in the bad, He in the murderer, He in the sin, and He in the sinner, He in life and He in death.

A tremendous proposal indeed!

Yet that is the theme which the Vedanta wants to prove, to demonstrate, to teach, and to preach. This is just the opening theme.

Thus we avoid the dangers of life and its evils. Do not want anything. What makes us miserable? The cause of all miseries from which we suffer has been made by desire, want. You want something, and the want is not fulfilled; the result is distress. If there is no want, there will be no more suffering. When we shall give up all our desires, what will be the result? The walls have no desires and

they never suffer. No, and they never evolve. This chair has no desires; it never suffers, and it is a chair, too, all the time. There is a glory in happiness, there is a glory in suffering. If I may dare to say so, there is a utility in evil, too. The great lesson in misery we all know. Hundreds of things we have done in our lives which we wish we had never done, but which, at the same time, have been great teachers. As for me, I am glad I have done something good and many things which were bad. I am glad I have done good things, and glad I have done something bad; glad I have done something right, and glad I have committed many errors, because everyone of them has been a great lesson.

I, as I am this minute, am the resultant of all I have done, all I have thought. Every action and thought have an effect, and this is the sum-total of my progress: I am going on merrily. Thus the problem becomes difficult. We all understand that desires are wrong, but what is meant by giving up desires? How can life go on? It would be the same suicidal advice, which means killing the desire and the patient too. So the answer comes. Not that you would not have property, not that you would not have things which are necessary, and things which are even luxuries. Have all that you want, and everything that you do not want sometimes, only know the truth and realise the truth. This wealth does not belong to anybody. Have no idea of proprietorship, possessorship. You are nobody, nor am I, nor anyone else. It all belongs to the Lord, because the opening verse told us to put the Lord in everything. God is in that wealth that you enjoy. He is in the desire that rises in your mind, He is in these things you buy because you desire; He is in your beautiful attire, in your beautiful ornaments. That is the line of thought. All will be meta-

morphosed as soon as you begin to see things in that light. If you put God in your every movement, in your clothes, in your talk, in your body, in your form, in everything, the whole scene changes, and the world, instead of appearing as woe and misery, will become a heaven.

"The kingdom of heaven is within you;" it is already there, says the Vedanta; so say others, so says every great teacher. "He that hath eyes to see, let him see," and "he that hath ears to hear, let him hear." It is already there. And that is one of the themes which the Vedanta undertakes to prove. It will prove also that the truth for which we have been searching all this time is already present, it was all the time with us. In our ignorance, we thought we had lost it, and went about all over the world crying and weeping, suffering misery to find the truth and all the time it was sitting in our own hearts. Thus do you work.

If giving up the world is true, and if it is taken in its crude, old sense, then it would come to mean this: that we must not work, that we must become idle, that we must sit like lumps of earth, and neither think nor do anything, but become fatalists, driven about by every circumstance, ordered about by the laws of nature, drifted from place to place. That would be the result. But that is not what is meant. We must work. Ordinary mankind, driven everywhere by false desires, what do they know of work? The man propelled by his own feelings and his own senses, what does he know about work? He works who is not propelled by his own desires, by any selfishness whatsoever. He works who has no ulterior motive in view. He works who has nothing to gain from work.

Who enjoys a picture, the seller of the picture or the seer? The seller is busy with his accounts, what his gain

will be, how much profit he will realise on the picture. His brain is full of that. He is looking at the hammer, and watching the bids. He is intent on hearing how fast the bids are rising. He is enjoying the picture who has gone there without any intention of buying or selling. He looks at the picture and enjoys it. So this whole Universe is a picture, and when these desires have vanished, men will enjoy the world, and then this buying and selling, and these foolish ideas of possession will be ended. The money-lender gone, the buyer gone, the seller gone, and this world the picture, a beautiful painting. I never read of any more beautiful conception of God than the following: "He, the great poet, the ancient poet: the whole Universe is his poem, coming in verses, and rhymes and rythms, written in infinite bliss." Then alone, when we have given up desires, shall we be able to read and enjoy this Universe of God. Then everything will become deified. Nooks and corners, byeways and shady places, which we thought so unholy, spots on its surface which appeared so black, will be all deified. They will all reveal their true nature, and we shall smile at ourselves, and think that all this weeping and crying has been the child's play, and we, the mother, were standing there watching.

Thus, says the Vedanta, do you work. It first advises us how to work—by giving up—giving up the world, the apparent, illusive world. What is meant by that? Seeing God everywhere, as said already. Thus do you work. Desire to live a hundred years, have all the earthly desires, if you will, only deify them, convert them into heaven, and live a hundred years. Have the desire to live a long life of enjoyment of blissfulness and activity on this earth. Thus working, you will find the way. There is no other way. If a man plunges headlong into foolish luxuries of the

world without knowing the truth, he has not reached the goal, he has missed his footing. And if a man curses the world, mortifies his flesh, goes into a forest, and kills himself bit by bit, by starving himself, makes his heart a barren waste, into a desert, kills out all his feeling, becomes stern, awful, dried-up, that man also has missed the way. These are the two extremes, the two mistakes at either end. Both have lost the way, both have missed the goal.

Thus, says the Venanta, thus work, putting God in everything, and knowing Him to be in everything, thus working incessantly, thus holding life a something deified, as God Himself, and knowing that this is all we have to do, this is all we have to ask for, because God is here in everything; where else shall I go to find Him? In every work, in every thought, in every feeling, He is already there. Thus knowing, we must work, and this is the only way; there is no other way. Thus the effects of work will not bind us down. You will not be injured by the effects of work. We have seen how these false desires are the causes of all the misery and evil we suffer, but when they are thus deified, purified, through God, when they come they bring no evil, they bring no misery. Those who have not learned this secret will have to live in a demoniacal world until they discover the secret. Persons do not know what an infinite mine of blissfulness and pleasure and happiness is here, in them, around them everywhere, and yet they have not discovered it. What is a demoniacal world? The Vedanta says Ignorance.

Says the Vedanta, we are dying of thirst sitting on the banks of the mightiest river. We are dying of hunger sitting near piles of food. Here is the blissful Universe.

We do not find it. We are in it; it is around us all the time, and we are always mistaking it. Religions propose to find this out for us. This blissful Universe is the real search in all hearts. It has been the search of all nations, it is the one goal of religion, and this ideal is expressed in various languages, and all the petty differences between religions and religions are mere word-struggles, nonsense. It is only difference of language that makes all these differences; one expresses a thought in one way, another a little differently, yet perhaps I am saying exactly what you are saying in different language. Then I say: "This is my original idea," because I want to get some praise, or to have things my own way. That is how struggles come in this life of ours.

So more questions arise in connection with this. It is very easy to talk about. From my childhood I have heard of this putting God everywhere and everything becomes deified, and then I can enjoy everything, but as soon as I come into this world, and get a few blows from it, everything vanishes. I am going out into the street to think that God is in every man, and a strong man comes and gives me a push and I fall flat on the footpath. Then I rise up quickly, and the blood has rushed into my head, and my fist is closed and reflection goes. Immediately I become mad. Everything is forgotten, instead of encountering God I see the devil. We have been told to see God since we were born; every religion has taught that—see God in everything and everywhere. Do you not remember in the New Testament how Christ explicitly says so. We have all been taught that, but it is when we come to the practical side, that the difficulty begins. You all remember how in *Æsop's Fables* a fine big stag is looking at his picture reflected in a lake, and says to his child, "How

powerful I am, look at my splendid head, look at my limbs, how strong and muscular they are; how swiftly I can run," and in the meantime he hears the barking of dogs in the distance, and immediately takes to his heels, and after he has run several miles he comes back panting. The child says, "You have just told me how strong you are, how is it that when the dogs barked you ran away?" "That is it, my son; when the dogs bark, everything vanishes." So are we all our lives. We are all thinking highly of poor humanity, but as soon as a dog barks we are off, and we run like a mad stag. Then what is the use, if such is the case, of teaching all these things? There is the greatest use. The use is this, that nothing is to be done in a day.

"This Self is first to be heard, then to be thought upon, and then meditated upon." Everyone can see the sky, even the very worm crawling upon the earth, as soon as he looks up, sees the blue sky, but how very far away it is. The mind goes everywhere, but the poor body takes a long time to crawl on the surface of the earth. So it is with all our ideals. The ideals are far away, and we are here far below. At the same time, we know that we must have an ideal. We must even have the highest ideal. And we know that unfortunately in this life the vast majority of persons are groping through this dark life of ours without any ideal at all. If a man with an ideal makes a thousand mistakes, I am sure, the man without an ideal makes fifty thousand mistakes. Therefore, it is better to have an ideal. And this ideal we must hear as much as we can, hear till it enters into our hearts, enters into our brains, hear till it enters into our very blood circulation, till the ideals tingle with every drop of our blood, till it fills every pore in our body. We must hear it. "Out of the fulness of the

heart the mouth speaketh," and out of the fulness of the heart the hand works too.

It is thought which is the propelling force in us. Fill the mind with the highest thoughts, hear them day after day, think of them month after month. Never mind failures, they are quite natural, they are the beauty of life, these failures. What would life be without these failures? It would not be worth having if it were not for the struggle. Where would be the poetry of life? Never mind the struggles, the mistakes. I never heard a cow tell a lie, but it is a cow—never a man. So never mind these failures, these little backslidings, have the ideal a thousand times, and if you fail a thousand times make the attempt once more. This is the ideal of a man to see God in everything. If you cannot see Him in everything see Him in one, in that thing which you like best, and then see Him in another. So on you can go. There is infinite life before the soul. Take your time and you will achieve your desire.

"He that One who vibrates quicker than mind, attains to more speed than mind can ever attain, to whom even the gods attain not or thought grasps. He moving everything moves. He is also standing still. In Him this all exists. He is moving, He also is the immoveable. He is near and He is far. He is inside everything. He is the outside of everything, interpenetrating everything. Whoever sees in every being that same Atman, and whoever sees everything in that Atman, he never goes far from that Atman. When all life and the whole Universe are seen in this Atman, then he also has attained the secret. There is no more delusion for him. Where is any more misery for him who sees this Oneness in the Universe?"

That is another great theme of the Vedanta, this Oneness of life, Oneness of everything. We will see how it

demonstrates that all our misery comes through ignorance, and this ignorance is the idea of manifoldness, this separation between man and man, man and woman, man and child, nation from nation, earth from moon, moon from sun, this separation between atom and atom is the cause really of all the misery, and the Vedanta says this separation does not exist, it is not real. It is merely apparent, on the surface. In the heart of things there is Unity still. If you go inside you find that Unity between man and man, women and children, races and races, high and low, rich and poor, the gods and men : all are One, and animals too, if you go deep enough, and he who has attained to that has no more delusion. He has reached that Unity which we call God in theology. Where is any more delusion for him? What can delude him? He knows the reality of everything, the secret of everything. Where is there any more misery for him? What does he desire? He has traced the reality of everything unto the Lord, that centre, that Unity of everything, and that is Eternal Bliss, Eternal Knowledge, Eternal Existence. Neither death nor disease, nor sorrow nor misery, nor discontent is There. All is Perfect Union and Perfect Bliss. For whom should he mourn then? In reality there is no death, there is no misery, in the centre, the reality, there is no one to be mourned for, no one to be sorry for. He has penetrated everything, the Pure One, the Formless, the Bodiless, the Stainless, He the Knower, He the Great Poet, the Self-Existent, He who is giving to everyone what he deserves. They are groping in darkness who are worshipping this ignorant world, the world that is produced out of ignorance. Those who are worshipping that world, thinking of it as of that Existence, are groping in darkness, and those who live their whole lives in this

world, and never find anything better or higher, are groping in still greater darkness.

But he who knows the secret of beautiful nature, thinking of pure nature through the help of nature, he crosses death, and through the help of that which is pure nature he enjoys Eternal Bliss. "Thou Sun, thou hast covered the truth with thy golden disk. Do thou open that for me so that I may see the truth which is inside thee. I have known the truth that is inside thee, I have known what is the real meaning of thy rays and thy glory, and see that which shines in thee, the truth in thee I see, and that which is within thee is within me also, and I in thee."

BHAKTI OR DEVOTION.

(1) Preparatory. (2) Supreme.

THE idea of Personal God has obtained in almost every religion, except a very few. With exception of the Buddhist and the Jain, perhaps, all the religions of the world have had the idea of a Personal God, and with it, comes the idea of devotion and worship. These two religions, the Buddhist and the Jain, although they have no Personal God to worship, have taken up the founders of their religions, and worship them precisely in the same way as others worship a Personal God. This idea of devotion and worship of some being who has to be loved, and who can reflect back the love to man is universal. This idea of love and devotion is manifested in various degrees, and through different stages, in various religions. The lowest stage is that of ritualism, when man wants things that are concrete, when abstract ideas are almost impossible, when they are dragged down to the lowest plane, and made concrete. Forms come into play and, along with them, various symbols. Throughout the history of the world, we find that man is trying to grasp the abstract through thought forms, or symbols, and all the external manifestations of religions—bells, music, rituals, books and images—all come under that head. Anything that appeals to the senses, anything that helps man to form a concrete image of the abstract, is taken hold of, and worshipped.

There have been reformers in every religion, from time to time, who have stood against all symbols and rituals, bu

vain have been their attempts, for, we find that so long as man will remain as he is, the vast majority of mankind will always want something concrete to hold on to, something around which, as it were, to place their ideas, something which will be the centre of all the thought forms in their minds. The great attempts of the Mohammedans, and of the Protestants (among the Christians) have been directed to this one end, of doing away with all rituals, and yet we find that even with them, rituals creep in. They cannot be kept out; after long struggle, the masses simply change one symbol for another. The Mohammedan, who thinks that every ritual, every form, image or ceremony, used by a non-Mohammedan is sinful, does not think so when he comes to his own temple at Kaba. Every religious Mohammedan, whenever he prays, must imagine that he is standing in the temple of Kaba, and when he makes a pilgrimage there, there is a black stone in the wall which he must kiss, and all the kisses that have been printed on that stone by millions and millions of pilgrims, will stand up as witnesses for the benefit of the faithful, at the last day of judgment. Then there is the well of Zimzim. Mohammedans believe that the sins of whosoever draws a little water out of that well, will be pardoned, and he will have a fresh body, and live for ever, after the day of resurrection.

In others we find that the symbology comes in the form of buildings. Protestants hold that churches are more sacred than other places. This church, as it is, stands for a symbol. Or there is the Book. The idea of the Book, to them, is much holier than any other symbol. The image of the Cross with the Protestants, takes the place of the image of the Saint with the Catholics. It is vain to preach against the use of symbols, and, why should we preach against

them? There is no reason under the sun why man should not use these symbols. They have them in order to represent the thing signified behind them. This universe is a symbol in and through which we are trying to grasp the thing signified, which is beyond and behind. This is the lower human constitution, and we are bound to have it so. Yet, at the same time, it is true that we are struggling to get to the thing signified, to get beyond the material, to the spiritual; the spirit is the goal, and not matter. Forms, images, bells, candles, books, churches, temples, and all holy symbols, are very good, very helpful to the growing plant of spirituality, but thus far and no farther. In the vast majority of cases, we find that the plant does not grow. It is very good to be born in a church, but it is very bad to die in a church. It is very good to be born within the limits of certain forms that help the little plant of spirituality, but if a man dies within the bonds of these forms, it shows that he has not grown, that there has been no development of the soul.

If, therefore, any one says that symbols and rituals and forms are to be kept for ever, that man is wrong, but if he says that these symbols and rituals are a help to the growth of the soul, when it is low and very concrete, he is right. By the way, you must not mistake this development of the soul as meaning anything intellectual. A man can be of gigantic intellect, yet, spiritually, he may be a baby, or even much worse than that. You can experiment it just this moment. All of you have been taught to believe in an Omnipresent God. Try to think of it. How few of you can have any idea of what omnipresence means? If you struggle hard, you will get the idea of the ocean, if you have seen that, or of the sky, or a vast stretch of green earth, or a desert, if you have seen that. All these are material images, and so long as you cannot conceive of

abstract *as* abstract, of the ideal *as* the ideal, you will have to grapple through these forms, these material images, either inside or outside the brain, it matters not. You are all born idolaters, and idolatry is good, because it is in the constitution of the human nature. Who can go beyond it? Only the perfect men, the God-men. The rest are all idolaters. So long as you see this universe before you, with its forms and shapes, you are all idolaters. Do you get shapes in the brain? You get just a little sensation somewhere in the brain. Why do you imagine this universe with all these colors and forms and shapes, this immense symbolical universe? This is a gigantic idol you are worshipping. He who says he is the body, is a born idolater. You are all spirits, spirits that have no form or shape, spirits that are infinite, and not matter. Therefore, anyone who thinks of himself as the body, as material, who cannot grasp the abstract, cannot think of himself as he is, except in and through matter, is an idolater. And yet how these people begin to fight with each other, each calling the other an idolater; that is to say, each says his idol is all right, and the other's is all wrong.

Therefore, we will get out of these silly notions of spiritual babies, we will get beyond the prattles of men who think that religion is merely a mass of frothy words, to whom religion is only a system of doctrines, to whom religion is only a little intellectual assent, or dissent, to whom religion is believing in certain words which their own priests tell them, to whom religion is something which their forefathers believed, to whom religion is a certain form of ideas and superstitions to which they hold on because they are their national superstitions. We will get beyond all these, and look at humanity as one vast organism, slowly coming towards light, this wonderful plant, slowly unfold-

ing itself to that wonderful truth which is called God, and the first gyrations, the first motions, towards this, are always through matter, through ritual. We cannot help it.

In the heart of all these ritualisms, there stands one idea prominent above all the rest—worship of a name. Those of you who have studied the older forms of Christianity, those of you who have studied the other religions of the world, perhaps, have remarked that there is a peculiar idea with them all, the worship of name. A name is said to be very sacred. "In the name of the Lord." You read that, among the Hebrews, the holy name was considered so holy that it could not be pronounced by an ordinary man; it was sacred beyond compare, holy beyond everything. It was the holiest of all names, and all of them thought that this very name was God. That is also true; for what is this universe but name and form? Can you think without words? Word and thought are inseparable. Try, if any one of you can separate them. Whenever you think, you are doing so through word forms. Words are the inner part, and thought is the outer part, and they must come together; they cannot be separated. The one brings the other; thought brings the word, and the word brings the thought. Thus, the whole universe is, as it were, the external symbol, and behind that stands the grand name of God. Each particular body is a form, and behind that particular body is its name. As soon as you think of your friend so-and-so, there comes the idea of his body, and as soon as you think of your friend's body, you get the idea of his name. This is in the constitution of man. That is to say, psychologically, in the mind-stuff of man there cannot come the idea of name without the idea of form, and there cannot come the idea of form without the idea of name. They are inseparable; they are the

external and the internal sides of the same wave. As such, names have been exalted and worshipped all over the world; consciously or unconsciously, man found the glory of names.

Again, we find that, in many different religions, holy personages have been worshipped. They worship Krishna, they worship Buddha, they worship Jesus, and so forth. Then there is the worship of saints: hundreds of them have been worshipped all over the world, and why not? The vibration of light is everywhere. The owl sees it in the dark. That shows it is there. But man cannot see it there. For the man, that vibration is only visible in the lamp, in the sun, in the moon. God is omnipresent; He is manifesting Himself in every being, but for men, He is only visible, recognizable, in man. When His light, His presence, His spirit, shines through the human face divine, then and then alone, can man understand Him. Thus, man has been worshipping God through men all the time, and must have so to worship, as long as he is a man. He may cry against it, struggle against it, but as soon as he attempts to realize God, he will find the constitutional necessity of thinking of God as a man. So, we find that these are the three primary points which we have in the worship of God, in almost every religion—forms, or symbols; names; God-men. All religions have these, but then you find that they want to fight with each other. One says, "My name is the only name, and not yours, and my form is the only form, and not yours, and my God-men are the only God-men in the world, and yours are simply myths." In modern times, the Christian clergymen have become a little kinder; so, they say that, in all these older religions, the different forms of worship were foreshadowings of what was going to happen; which, of course, is the only true form—their own. God tested

Himself in older times, tested His powers, by getting these things in shape, but He really worked them out in Christianity, later on. That, at least, is a good step. Fifty years ago, they would not have said even that; everything was nothing, except their own religion and that was everything. This idea is not limited to any religion, or any nation, or any state of persons; people are always thinking that the only thing to be done, is what they themselves do, and that is where the study of different religions help us. It shows us that the same thoughts that we have been calling ours, and ours alone, were present hundreds of years ago in others, and sometimes even in a better form of expression than our own.

These are the external forms of devotion, through which man has to pass, but if he is sincere, if he really wants to reach the truth, he gets higher than these, to a plane where forms are as nothing. Forms are simply the kindergarten of religion, the child's preparation. Temples or churches, books or forms, are just for the child's play, so as to make the spiritual man strong enough to take yet higher steps, and these first steps are necessary to be taken if he wants religion. With that thirst, that want for God, comes real devotion, real Bhakti. Who wants? That is the question. Religion is not doctrines, nor dogmas, nor intellectual argumentation; it is being and becoming; it is realization. We here everybody talking about God and soul, and all the mysteries of the universe, but if you will take them one by one, and ask them, "Have you realized God? Have you seen your Soul?" how many dare say they have? And yet they are all fighting! I remember once, in India, representatives of different sects got together, and began to dispute. One said that the only God was Siva; another said the only

God was Vishnu, and so on, and there was no end to their discussions. A sage was passing that way, and he was invited by the disputants to join with them. He went there, and the first question he asked was of the man who was claiming Siva as the greatest God; "Have you seen Siva? Are you acquainted with Him? If not, how do you know He is the greatest God?" He asked the same question of the other party; "Have you seen Vishnu?" And after asking this question of all of them, it was found out that not one of them had known anything of God; and that was why they were disputing so much; had they really known, they would not have been disputing. When a jar is being filled, it makes all sorts of noises, but when it is full, it is calm and silent; it has known the truth. So, the very fact of these disputations and fightings among sects, shows that they do not know anything about religion; religion, to them, is a mere mass of frothy words, to be written in books. Each one hurries to write a big book, to make it as massive as possible, to steal from everybody he can lay his hands on, and never acknowledges his indebtedness, and then he wants to launch this book on the world, to make one more disturbance in these already existing hundred thousand fights.

The vast majority of men are atheists. I am glad that, in modern times, another set of atheists has come up in the Western world, the materialists, because they are sincere atheists; they are better than these religious atheists, who are insincere, who talk about religion, and fight about it, and yet never want it, never try to realize it, never try to understand it. Remember those words of Christ—"Ask and ye shall receive, seek and ye shall find, knock and it shall be opened unto you." Those words were literally true, not figures, or fictions. They were ground

out of the heart's blood of one of the greatest children of God who ever came to this world of ours, words which came as the fruit of realization, not from books, but from a man who had realized God Himself, and had felt God; who had spoken with God, lived with God, a hundred times more intensely than you or I see this building. Who wants God? That is the question. Do you think all this mass of people in the world want God, and cannot get Him? That cannot be. What want is there without its object outside? Do you ever see man wanting to breathe, and there is no air for them to breathe? Did you ever hear of a man who wanted to eat, and there was no food outside? What creates these desires? The existence of external things. It was the light that made the eyes; it was the sound that made the ears. So every desire in human beings has been created by something which already existed outside, and this desire for perfection, for reaching the goal, and getting beyond nature, how can it be there, until something has drilled it into the soul of man, created it, and made it live there? He, therefore, in whom this desire is awakened, will reach the goal. But who wants? We want everything but God. This is not religion that you see all around you. My lady has varieties of furniture, from all over the world, in her parlor, but now it is the fashion to have a Japanese something, and she buys a vase and puts it in some corner. Such is religion with the vast majority; they have all sorts of things for enjoyment, and without just a little flavor of religion, life is not all right, because society would criticise. Society says something; so, he or she has some religion. This is the present state of religion in the world.

A disciple went to his master and said to him, "Sir, I want religion." The master looked at the young man, and

did not speak; only smiled. The young man came every day, and insisted that he wanted religion. But the old man knew better than the young man. One day, when it was very hot, he asked the young man to go to the river with him, and take a plunge. The young man plunged in, and the old man after him, and held the young man down under the water by main force. When the young man had struggled for a good while, he let him go, and, when the young man came up, asked him what he wanted most while he was under the water. "A breath of air," the disciple answered. Do you want God that way? If you do, you will get Him in a moment. Until you have that thirst, that desire, you cannot get religion, however you struggle with your intellect, or your books, or your forms. Until that thirst is awakened in you, you are no better than any atheist, only that the atheist is sincere, and you are not.

A great sage used to say, "Suppose there is a thief in a room, and somehow he gets to know that there is a vast mass of gold in the next room, and there is only a thin partition between the two rooms, what would be the condition of that thief? He would be sleepless, he would not be able to eat, or do anything. His whole mind would be on that gold. How to drill a hole in that wall, and get at the wealth, would be his whole thought; and do you mean to say that if all these people really believed that the mine of happiness, of blessedness, of glory, God Himself, were here, they would again go and do just as usual in the world, without trying to get God?" As soon as a man begins to believe there is a God, he becomes mad with longing to get to Him. Others may go their way, but as soon as a man is sure that there is a much higher life than that which he is leading here, as soon as he feels sure that the senses are not

all, that this limited, material body is as nothing compared with the immortal, eternal, undying bliss of the Self, he becomes mad until he finds this bliss out for himself, and this madness, this thirst, this mania, is what is called the "awakening" to religion, and when that has come, a man is beginning to be religious. But it takes a long time. All these forms and ceremonies, these prayers, and pilgrimages, these books, bells, candles, and priests, are the preparations; they take off the impurities from the soul; and when the soul has become pure, it naturally wants to get to its own source, the mine of all purity, God himself. Just as a piece of iron which had been covered with the dust of centuries, though it was lying near a huge magnet all the time, is not attracted, when by some cause or other this dust is cleared off, its natural attraction is aroused, and the iron is drawn towards the magnet; so this human soul, covered with the dust of ages, impurities, wickedness, and sins, after millions of births, by these forms and ceremonies, by doing dood to others, loving other beings, becomes purified, and when it is purified enough, its natural attractions come, and it wakes up, and struggles towards God. This is the beginning of religion.

Yet, all these forms and symbols are simply the beginning; not love proper. Love we hear spoken of everywhere. Everyone says love God. Men do not know what it is to love; if they did, they would not talk so easily about it. Every man says, he can love, and then, in five minutes, finds out there was no love in his nature. Every woman says she can love, and finds out in three minutes that she cannot. The world is full of talk of love, but it is hard to love. Where is love? How do you know that there is love? The first test of love is that it knows no bargain. So long as you see a man love another to get

something, you may know that it is not love; it is shopkeeper's love. Wherever there is any question of buying or selling, it is no more love. So, when any man is praying to God, " Give me this, and give me that," it is not love. How can it be? I give you my little prayer, and you give me something in return; that is what it is, mere shopkeeping.

There was a certain great king who went to hunt in a forest, and there he happened to meet a sage. He had a little conversation with this sage, and became so pleased with him that he asked bim to accept a present from him. " No," says the sage, " I am perfectly satisfied with my condition; these trees give me enough fruits to eat; these beautiful pure streams supply me with all the water I want; I sleep in these caves. What do I care for your presents, though you be an emperor." The emperor says: " Just to purify myself, to gratify me, take some present, and come with me into the city." At last the sage consented to go with this emperor, and he was brought into the emperor's palace, wherein were gold, and jewelry, and marble, and most wonderful things. Wealth and power were manifest in this palace, and there that poor sage from the forest was ushered in. The emperor asked him to wait a minute while he repeated his prayer, and he went into a corner and began to pray, " Lord, give me more wealth, more children, more territory." In the meanwhile, the sage got up, and began to walk away. The emperor saw him going, and went after him. " Stay Sir, you did not take my present, and are going away." The sage turned round to him and said: " Beggar, I do not beg of beggars. What can you give? You have been begging yourself all the time." That is not the language of love. What is the difference between love and shopkeeping, if you ask God to

give you this, and give you that? The first test of love is that it knows no bargaining; it always gives. Love takes upon itself the stand of a giver, and never that of a taker. Says the child of God: "If God wants, I give Him even my threadbare coat, but I do not want anything of Him, I want nothing in this universe. I love Him because I want to love Him, and I ask no favour in return. Who cares whether God is almighty or not, because I do not want any power from Him, nor any manifestation of His power. Sufficient for me that He is the God of love. I ask no more questions."

The second test is that love knows no fear. How can you frighten love? Does the lamb love the lion? The mouse the cat? The slave the master? Slaves sometimes simulate love, but is it love? Where do you ever see love in fear? It is always sham. So long as man thinks of God, as sitting above the clouds, with a reward in one hand and punishment in the other, there can be no love. With love never comes the idea of fear, or of anything that makes us afraid. Think of a young mother in the street and a dog barking at her; she flies into the next house. Suppose the next day she is in the street with her child and a lion is upon the child; where will be her position? Just in the mouth of the lion, protecting her child. Love conquered all fear. So also in love to God. Who cares whether God is a rewarder or a punisher? That is not the thought of a lover. Think of a judge when he comes home, what does his wife see in him? Not a judge, or a rewarder, or a punisher, but her husband, her love. What do the children see in him? Their loving father; not the punisher, or a rewarder. So the children of God never see in Him a punisher or a rewarder. It is all outside people, who have never tasted love, that begin to fear, and

quake their lives out. Cast off all fear—these horrible ideas of God as a punisher or rewarder, though they may have their use in savage minds. Some men, even the most intellectual, are spiritual savages, and these ideas may help them. But to men who are spiritual, men who are approaching religion, in whom spiritual insight is awakened, such ideas are simply childish, simply foolish. Such men reject all ideas of fear.

The third is still a higher test. Love is always the highest ideal. When one has passed through the first two stages—when he has thrown off all shopkeeping, and cast off all fear—he then begins to realize that love was always the highest ideal. How many times in this world we see that the most beautiful woman loves the ugliest man. How many times we see one of the handsomest of men love a very ugly woman. Where is the attraction to them? Those that are standing aside see the ugly man, or the ugly woman, but not the lover, to the lover they are the most beautiful beings that ever existed. How is it? The woman who was loving the ugly man loved, as it were, the ideal of beauty which was in her own brain, and projected it over this ugly man, and what she worshipped and loved was, not the ugly man but her own ideal. That man was, as it were, only the suggestion, and upon that suggestion she threw her own ideal, and covered it, and it became her object of worship. Now, this applies in every case where we love. Think how many of us have very common looking brothers or sisters; yet the very idea of brother makes them to us the handsomest of men, and the very idea of sister makes them the handsomest of women.

The philosophy in the background is that each one projects his ideal and worships that. This external world is only the world of suggestion. All that we see, we

project out of our own minds. A grain of sand gets into the shell of an oyster. It begins to irritate the oyster and the oyster immediately covers the sand with a secretion of its own juice, and the result is the beautiful pearl. This is what we are all doing. External things are only the bits of sand which are making the suggestions, and over these we project our own ideals, and cover the externals. The wicked will see this world as a perfect hell, and the good will see it as a perfect heaven. Lovers see this world as full of love, and haters as full of hatred, fighters see nothing but fighting in the world, peace-makers nothing but peace, the perfect man sees nothing but God. So we always worship our highest ideals, and when we have reached the point, when we love the ideal *as* the ideal, all arguments and doubts have vanished for ever. Who cares whether a God can be demonstrated or not ? The ideal can never escape, because it is a part of my own nature. I shall only question that ideal, when I question my own existence, and as I cannot question the one, I shall not question the other. Who cares whether science can demonstrate to me a God outside of myself, living somewhere, managing this universe by fits and starts, creating it for several days, and then going to sleep for the rest of time ? Who cares whether God can be Almighty and All-Merciful at the same time, or not ? Who cares whether He is the rewarder of mankind, whether He looks at us with the eyes of a tyrant, or with the eyes of a beneficent monarch ? The lover has passed beyond all these things, beyond rewards and punishments, beyond fears, or doubts, or scientific, or any other demonstration. Sufficient unto him is the ideal of love, and is it not self-evident that this universe is but a manifestation of this love ? What is it that makes atoms come and join atoms, molecule, molecule,

sets big planets flying towards each other, attracts man to woman, woman to man, human beings to human beings, animals to animals, drawing the whole universe, as it were, towards one centre? This is what is called love. Its manifestation is from the lowest atom to the highest ideal, omnipresent, all-pervading, everywhere is this love. What is manifesting itself as attraction in sentient and insentient, in the particular and in the universal, is the love of God. It is the one motive power that is in the universe. Under the impetus of that love, Christ stands to give up his life for humanity, Buddha for an animal, the mother for the child, the father for the wife. It is under the impetus of the same love that men are ready to give up their lives for their country, and strange to say, under the impetus of that same love, the thief goes to steal, the murderer to murder; for, even in these cases, the spirit is the same, but the manifestation is different. This is the one motive power in the universe. The thief had love for gold; the love was there, but it was misdirected. So, in all crimes, as well as in all virtuous actions, behind stand that eternal love. Suppose one of you takes out a piece of paper from your pocket, and writes a cheque for a thousand dollars for the poor of New York, and, at the same time, I take a piece of paper, and I try to forge your name. The light will be the same for both; you and I are responsible for the manifestation; it is not light that is to blame. Unattached, yet shining in everything, the motive power of the universe, without which the universe will fall to pieces in a moment, is love; and this love is God.

"None, O beloved, loves the husband for the husband's sake, but for the Self that is in the husband she loves the husband; none, O beloved, ever loves the wife

for the wife's sake, but for the Self that is in the wife. None ever loved anything else, except for the Self." Even this selfishness, which is so much condemned, is but a manifestation of the same love. Stand aside from this play, do not mix in it, but see this wonderful panorama, this grand drama, played scene after scene, hear this wonderful harmony; all are the manifestation of the same love. Even in selfishness, that Self will multiply, grow and grow. That one Self, the one man, will become two selves when he gets married, several, when he gets children, will become a whole village, a whole city, and yet grow and grow until he will take the whole world as his Self, the whole universe as his Self. That Self, in the long run, will gather all men, all women, all children, all animals, the whole universe. I will have grown into one mass of universal love, infinite love, and that love is God.

Thus, we come to what is called supreme Bhakti, supreme devotion, when forms and symbols have fallen off. One who has reached that, cannot enter into any sect, for all sects are in him. What shall he enter? Such a one cannot enter into any temple or church, for all churches and temples are in him. Where is the church big enough for him? Such a one cannot bind himself down to certain limited forms. Where is the limit for unlimited Love, with whom he has become one? In all religions which take up this ideal of love, we find the struggle to express it. Although we understand what this love means, and though we see that everything in this world of affections and attractions is but a manifestation, partial or otherwise, of that Infinite love, the expression which has been attempted by sages and saints of different nations, yet we find them ransacking the powers of language until the most carnal expressions stand transfigured.

Thus sang the royal Hebrew sage, thus sang they of India. "O beloved, one kiss of Thy lips, one that has been kissed by Thee, his thirst for Thee increaseth for ever. All sorrows cease, and he forgets the past, present, and future, and only thinks of Thee alone." That is the madness of the lover, when all desires have vanished. Who cares for salvation ? Who cares to be saved ? Who cares to be perfect even ? Who cares for freedom, says the lover.

I do not want wealth, no, not even health, I do not want beauty, do not want intellect; let me be born again and again, amid all the evils that are in the world ; I will not complain, but let me love Thee, and that for love's sake. That is the madness of love, which finds its expression in these songs, and the highest, most expressive, strongest, the most attractive human love is that between the sexes, and it was, therefore, that language which they took up. It was the madness of sexual love that was the faintest echo of the mad love of the saint. These are they who want to become mad, inebriated with the love of God ; "God intoxicated men." They want to drink the cup of love which has been brewed by saints and sages of every religion, in which those great lovers of God have poured their heart's blood, into which have been concentrated all the hopes of those who have loved without seeking reward, who wanted love itself. They wanted nothing beyond love ; the reward of love is love, and what a reward it is ! It is the only thing that takes off all sorrows, the only cup by the drinking of which, this disease of the world vanishes. Man becomes divinely mad, and forgets that he is man.

Lastly, we find that all these various systems, in the end, converge to that one point, that perfect union. We always begin as Dualists. God is a separate being, and I am a separate being. Love comes in the middle, and man begins

to approach God, and God, as it were, begins to approach man. Man takes up all the various relationships of life, as father, as mother, as friend, as lover; he exists as all these and the last point comes when he becomes one with the object of worship. I am you, and you are I, and worshipping you, I worship myself, and in worshipping myself, I worship you. There we find the highest culmination of that with which man begins. Where we begin, there we end. At the beginning it was love for the Self, but the claims of the little self made love selfish; at the end, came the full blaze of light, when that Self had become the Infinite. That God, who, at first, was a body somewhere, became resolved, as it were, into infinite Love. Man himself was also transformed. He was approaching God, he was throwing off all vain desires of which he was full before. With desires vanished selfishness, and at the apex, he found that Love, Lover, and Beloved are One.

VEDANTA.*

TWO worlds there are in which we live, one the external, the other the internal. Human progress has been, from times of yore, almost in parallel lines along both these worlds. The search began in the external, and man at first wanted to get answers for all the deep problems from outside nature. Man wanted to satisfy his thirst for the beautiful and the sublime from all that surrounded him; man wanted to express himself and all that was within him in the language of the concrete; and grand, indeed, were the answers, most marvellous ideas of God and worship, most rapturous expressions of the beautiful. Sublime ideas came from the external world indeed. But the other, opening out for humanity later, laid out before him a universe yet sublimer, yet more beautiful, and infinitely more expansive. In the *Karma Kânda* portion of the Vedas we find the most wonderful ideas of religion inculcated, we find the most wonderful ideas about an over-ruling Creator, Preserver and Destroyer and this universe presented before us in language sometimes the most soul-stirring. Most of you, perhaps, remember that most wonderful *sloka* in the Rig Veda Samhita where you get the description of chaos, perhaps the sublimest that has ever been attempted yet. In spite of all this we find it is only a painting of the sublime outside, in spite of all this we find that yet it is gross, that something of matter yet clings on to it. Yet we find that it is only the expression of the In-

* A lecture delivered at Lahore on the 12th November, 1897.

finite in the language of matter, in the language of the finite, it is the infinite of the muscles and not of the mind. It is the infinite of space and not of thought. Therefore in the second portion or *Jnana Kanda* we find there is altogether a different procedure. The first was to search out from external nature the truths of the universe. The first attempt was to get the solution of all the deep problems of life from the material world. *Yasyaite Himavanto mahatwam.*

"Whose glory these Himalayas declare." This is a grand idea, but yet it was not grand enough for India. The Indian mind had to fall back—and the research took a different direction altogether from the external, the search came into the internal, from matter into mind. There arose the cry "when a man dies, what becomes of him?" *Astityeke nayamastiti chaike, &c.*

"Some say that he exists, others that he is gone; say Oh king of Death, what is truth?" An entirely different procedure we find here. The Indian mind got what was to be got from the external world, but it did not feel satisfied with that; it wanted to search more, to dig in its own interior, to seek from its own soul, and the answer came.

Upanishads, or Vedanta, or A'ranyakas, or Rahasya, is the name of this portion of the Vedas. Here we find at once that religion has got rid of all external formalities. Here we find at once not that spiritual things are told in the language of matter, but that spirituality is preached in the language of the spirit, the superfine in the language of the superfine. No more any grossness attaches to it, no more is there any compromise with things that concern us. Bold, brave, beyond our conception of the present day, stand the giant minds of the sages of the Upanishads, de-

claring the noblest truths that have ever been preached unto humanity, without any compromise, without any fear. This, my countrymen, I want to lay before you. Even the *Jnana Kanda* of the Vedas is a vast ocean; many lives are necessary to understand even the least bit of it. Truly has it been said of the Upanishads by Ramanuja that the Vedanta is the head, the shoulders, the crested form of the Vedas, and surely enough it has become the Bible of modern India. The Hindus have the greatest respect for the *Karma Kanda* of the Vedas, but for all practical purposes, we know that for ages by *S'ruti* has been meant the Upanishads and the Upanishads alone. We know that all our great Philosophers, either Vyâsa, or Patanjali, or Gautama, or even the great father of all Philosophy, the great Kapila himself, wherever they wanted an authority for what they wrote, from the Upanishads every one of them got it and nowhere else, for it is therein that are the truths that remain for ever.

There are truths that are true only in a certain line, in a certain direction, under certain circumstances, and for certain times, those that are founded on the institutions of the time; there are other truths that are based on the nature of man himself that must endure so long as man himself endures. These are the truths that alone can be universal, and in spite of all the changes that we are sure must have come in India, as to our social surroundings, our methods of dress, our manner of eating, our modes of worship, even all these have changed, but these universal truths of the *S'rutis*, the marvellous Vedantic ideas, stand in their own sublimity, immovable, unvanquishable, deathless, and immortal. Yet the germs of all the ideas that are developed in the Upanishads have been taught already in the *Karma Kanda*. The idea of the cosmos, which all

sects of Vedantists had to take for granted, the psychology which has formed the common basis of all Indian schools of thought, had been worked out already and presented before the world. A few words, therefore, about it are necessary before we start into the spiritual portion of the Vedanta alone, and I want to clear myself of one thing first, that is, my use of the word Vedanta. Unfortunately there is a mistake committed many times in modern India, that the word Vedanta has reference only to the Advaitist system, but you must always remember that in modern India there are the three *Prasthanas* for man to study. First of all there are the revelations, by which I mean the Upanishads. Secondly, among our philosophies, the Sutras of Vyâsa have got the greatest prominence, on account of their being the summation of all the preceding systems of philosophy; not that these systems are contradictory to one another, but the one is based on the other, it is a gradual unfolding of the theme which culminates in the Sutras of Vyâsa; and between the Upanishads and the Sutras, which are the systematising of the marvellous truths of the Vedanta, come in the divine commentary of the Vedanta, S'ri Gitâ. The Upanishads, the Gitâ, and the Vyâsa Sutras, therefore, have been taken up by every sect in India which wants to claim authority to be orthodox, whether Dualist, or Vaishnavist, or Advaitist it matters little, but the authorities of each are these three. We find that a S'ankarâchârya, or a Ramânuja, or a Madhwacharya, or a Vallabhacharya, or a Chaitanya,—any one who wanted to propound a new sect—had to take up these three systems and write only a new commentary on them. Therefore, it would be wrong to confine the word Vedanta only to one system which has arisen out of the Upanishads. All these have been covered

by the word Vedanta. The Ramanujist has as much right to be called a Vedantist as the Advaitist; in fact I will go a little further and say that what we really mean by the word Hindu is the word Vedantist; the word Vedantist will express it too. One idea more I want you to note, that although these three systems have been current in India almost from time immemorial—for you must not believe that Sankara was the inventor of the Advaitist system; it existed ages before Sankara was born; he was one of its last representatives. So was the Ramanujist system; it existed ages before Ramanuja existed as we already know by the commentaries they have written; so were all the Dualistic systems that have existed side by side with the others, and with my little knowledge I have come to the conclusion that they do not contradict each other. Just as in the case of the six *Darsanas* of ours, we find they are a grand unfolding of the grand principles, the music beginning in the soft low tones, and ending in the triumphant blast of the Advaita, so also in these three systems we find the gradual working up of the human mind towards higher and higher ideals, till everything is merged in that wonderful unity which is reached in the Advaita system. Therefore, these three are not contradictory. On the other hand, I am bound to tell you that this has been a mistake committed by not a few. We find an Advaitist preacher keeps these texts which teach Advaitism especially entire, and gets hold of the Dualistic or Qualified-dualistic text and tries to bring them into his own meaning. We find Dualistic teachers leaving those passages that are expressly Dualistic alone, and getting hold of Advaitic texts and trying to force them into a Dualistic meaning; they have been great men, our Gurus, yet there is such a saying as *dosha*, even the faults of a Guru must be told. I am of opinion that in this

only they were mistaken. We need not go into text torturing, we need not go into any sort of religious dishonesty, we need not go into any sort of grammatical twaddle, we need not go about trying to put our own ideas into texts which were never meant for these ideas, but the work is plain and it is easier once you understand the marvellous doctrine of Adhikara Vedas. It is true that the Upanishads have one theme before them. "What is that knowing which we know everything else?" In modern language the theme of the Upanishads like the theme of every other knowledge, is to find an ultimate unity of things, for you must remember that knowledge is nothing but finding unity in the midst of diversity. Each science is based upon this; all human knowledge is based upon the finding of unity in the midst of diversity; and if it is the task of small bits of human knowledge, which we call our sciences, to find unity in the midst of a few different phenomena, the task becomes stupendous when the theme before us is to find unity in the midst of this marvellously diversified universe, different in name and form, different in matter and spirit, different in everything, each thought differing from every other thought, each form differing from every other form, how many planes, unending *lokas*—in the midst of this to find unity, this is the theme of the Upanishads that we understand. On the other hand, the old idea of *Arundhati Nyaya* applies. To show a man the Pole Star one takes the nearest star which is bigger than the Pole Star and more brilliant, and leads him to fix his mind on that, until at last he comes to the Pole Star. This is the task before us, and to prove my idea I have simply to show you the Upanishads, and you will see it. Nearly every chapter begins with Dualistic teaching, *upasana*. Later on God is first taught as some one who is

the Creator of this universe, its Preserver, and unto Whom everything goes at last. He is One to be worshipped, the Ruler, the Guide of nature, external and internal, yet as if he were something outside of Nature and external. One step further, and we find the same teacher teaching that this God is not outside Nature, but immanent in Nature. And at last both ideas are discarded and whatever is real is He; there is no difference. *Tat twam asi Svetaketo.*—That immanent one is at last declared to be the same that is in the human soul. "Svetaketu, Thou that art." Here is no compromise; here is no fear of other's opinions. Truth, bold truth, has been taught in bold language, and we need not fear to preach the truth in the same bold language to-day, and by the Grace of God I hope at least to be the bold one who dares to be that bold preacher.

To go back to our preliminaries. There are first two things to be understood, one the psychological aspect common to all the Vedantic schools, and the other cosmological aspect. To-day you find wonderful discoveries of modern science coming upon us like bolts from the blue, opening our eyes to marvels we never dreamt of. Man had long since discovered what he calls force. It is only the other day that man came to know that even in the midst of this variety of forces there is a unity. Man has just discovered that what he calls heat, or magnetism or electricity, or so forth, are all convertible into one thing, and as such he expresses all that one unit force, whatever you may call it. This has been done even in the Samhita; old and ancient, hoary as the Samhita is, that very idea of force I was referring you to. All the forces, either you call them gravitation, or attraction, or repulsion, either expressing themselves as heat, or electricity, or magnetism, are nothing, not one step further.

Either they express themselves as thought, reflected from *antahkarana*, the inner organs of man have one organ, and the unit from which they spring is what is called the *prana*. Again what is *prana?* *Prana* is *spandana* or vibration. When all this universe will have resolved back into its primal state, what becomes of this infinite force? Do they think that it becomes extinct? Of course not. If it became extinct, what would be the cause of the next wave, because the motion is going in wave forms, rising, falling, rising again, falling again? Here is the word *srishti* which expresses the universe. Mark that the word is not creation. I am helpless in talking English; I have to translate the Sanskrit words anyhow. It is *srishti*, projection. Everything becomes finer and finer and is resolved back to the primal state from which it sprang, and there it remains for a time, quiescent, ready to spring forth again. That is *srishti*, projection. And what becomes of all these forces the *prana*? They are resolved back into the primal *prana*, and this *prana* becomes almost motionless—not entirely motionless, but almost motionless—and that is what is described in the *sukta*. "It vibrated without vibrations," a *anidavatam*. There are many difficult texts in the Upanishads to understand, especially in the use of technical phrases. For instance the word *vayu*, to move; many times it means air and many times motion, and often people confuse one with the other. We have to take care of this. "It existed in that form." And what becomes of what you call matter? The forces permeate all matter; they all dissolve into ether, from which they again come out: and the first to come out was *akasa*. Whether you translate it as ether, or anything else, this is the idea, that this *akasa* is the primal form of matter. This *akasa* vibrates under the action of *prana*, and when the next

srishti in coming up, as the vibration becomes quicker, the *akasa* is lashed into all these wave forms which we call suns, and moons, and systems.

Yadidam kincha jagat sarvam prana ejati nissritam.

We read again: "Everything in this universe has been projected, *prana* vibrating." You must remark the word *ejati* because it comes from *ej*, to vibrate. *Nissritam*—projected, *yadidam kincha*—whatever is this universe.

This is a part of the cosmological side. There are many details working into it. For instance, how the procedure takes place, how there is first ether, and how from the ether come other things, how that ether begins to vibrate, and from that *vayu* comes. But the one idea is here, that it is from the finer that the grosser has come. Gross matter is the last to come and the most external and this gross matter had the finer matter before it. Yet we see that the whole thing has been resolved into two, and there is not yet any unity. There is the unity of force, *prana*; there is the unity of matter called *akasa*. Is there any unity to be found among them again? Can they be melted into one? Our modern science is mute here, has not yet found its way out, and if it is finding its way out, just as it has been slowly finding the same old *prana* and the same ancient *akasa*, it will have to move along the same lines. The next unity is the omnipresent, impersonal being, known by its old mythological name as *Brahma*, the four-headed *Brahma*, and psychologically called *mahat*. This is where the two unite. What is called your mind is only a bit of this *mahat* caught in the trap of the brain, and the sum total of all brains caught in the meshes of *mahat* is what you call *samashti*. Analysis had to go further; it was not yet complete. Here we were each one of

us, as it were, a microcosm, and the world taken altogether is the macrocosm. But whatever is in the *vyashti* we may safely conjecture that a similar thing is happening also outside. If we had the power to analyse our own minds, we might safely conjecture that the same thing is happening in our own minds. What is this mind, is the question. In modern times, in Western countries as physical science is making rapid progress, as physiology is step by step conquering stronghold after stronghold of old religions, the Western people do not know where to stand, because to their great despair modern physiology has identified the mind with the brain at every step. And that we in India have known always. That was the first proposition the Hindu boy should learn, that the mind is matter, only finer. The body is gross, and behind the body is what we call the *sukshmasarira*, the fine body or mind. This is also material, only finer; and it is not the *atman*. I will not translate this word to you in English, because the idea does not exist in Europe; it is untranslatable. The modern attempt of German philosophers is to translate the word *atman* by the word 'self,' and until that word is universally accepted it is impossible to use it. So, call it as self or anything, it is our *atman*. This *atman* is the real man behind. It is the *atman* that uses the material mind as its instrument, its *antahkarana*, as the psychological term for the mind is. And the mind by means of a series of internal organs works the visible organs of the body. What is this mind? It was only the other day that Western philosophers have come to know that the eyes are not the real organs of vision, but that behind these are other organs, the *indriyas*, and if these are destroyed a man may have a thousand eyes, like Indra, but there will be no sight for him. Aye, your philosophy

starts with this assumption, that by vision is not meant the external vision. The real vision belongs to the internal organs, the brain centres inside. You may call them what you like, but it is not that the *indriyas* are the eyes, or the nose or the ears. And the sum total of all these *indriyas* plus the *manas*, *buddhi*, *chitta*, *ahankara*, is what is called the mind, and if the modern physiologist comes to tell you that the brain is what is called the mind and that the brain is formed of so many organs, you need not be afraid at all; tell him your philosophers knew it always; it is the very alpha of your religion.

Well, then, we have to understand now what is meant by this *manas*, *buddhi*, *chitta*, *ahankara*, etc. First of all let there be *chitta*: it is the mind stuff. That part of the *mahat*—it is the generic name for the mind itself, including all its various states. Suppose here is a lake, on a summer evening smooth and calm, without a ripple on its surface. Let us call this the *chitta*. And suppose anybody throws a stone upon this lake. What happens? First there is the action, the blow given to the water; next the water ascends and sends a reaction towards the stone, and that reaction takes the form of a wave. First the water vibrates a little, and immediately sends back a reaction in the form of a wave. This *chitta* let us compare to this lake, and the external objects are like these stones thrown into it. As soon as it comes in contact with any external object by means of these *indriyas*—the *indriyas* must be there to take these external objects inside—there is a vibration, what is called the *manas* indecisive. Next there is a reaction, the determinative faculty, *buddhi*, and along with this *buddhi* flashes the idea *aham* and the external object. Suppose there is a mosquito sitting upon my hand. This sensation is carried to my *chitta* and this

vibrates a little; this is the psychological *manas*. Then there is reaction, and immediately comes the idea that I have a mosquito on my hand, and that I shall have to drive it off. Thus these stones are thrown into the lake, but in the case of the lake every blow that comes to it is from the external world, while in the case of the lake of the mind the blows may either come from the external world, or the internal world. This is what is called the *antakarna*. Along with it you ought to understand one thing more that will help us in understanding the Advaita system later on. It is this. All of you must have seen pearls, and most of you know how pearls are made. Some irritating grain of dust or sand enters into the body of the mother-of-pearl, oyster, and sets up an irritation there, and the oyster's body reacts towards the irritation and covers the little grain with its own juice. That crystallizes and forms the pearl. So the whole universe is like that, the universe is the pearl which is being formed by us. What we get from the external world is simply the blow. Even to know that blow we have to react, and as soon as we react we project really a portion of our own mind towards the blow, and when we come to know of it, it is really our own mind as it has been shaped by the blow. Therefore it is clear even to those who want to believe in a hard and fast realism of an external world, and they cannot but admit it in these days of physiology, that supposing that we represent the external world by "X" what we know really is "X" plus mind, and this mind element is so great that it has covered the whole of that "X" which has remained unknown and unknowable throughout, and therefore if there is an external world it is always unknown and unknowable. What we know of it is as moulded, formed, fashioned by our own mind. So with the internal world. The same applies as

about our own soul, the *atman*. In order to know the *atman* we shall have to know it through the mind, and therefore what little we know of this *atman* is simply the *atman* plus the mind. That is to say, the *atman* covered over, fashioned, and moulded by the mind and nothing more. We shall come to this a little later, but we will remember it here.

The next thing to understand is this. The question arose, this body is the name of one continuous stream of matter. Every moment we are adding material to it, and every moment material is getting out of it, like unto a river continually flowing, vast masses of water always changing places; at the same time we take up the whole in imagination, and call it the same river. What do we call the river? Every moment the water is changing, the shore is changing, every moment the trees and plants, the leaves, and the foliage are changing; what is the river? It is the name of this series of changes. So with the mind. There is the Buddhistic side, the great *Kshanika Vijnana Vada* doctrine, most difficult to understand, but most rigorously and logically worked out, and this arose also in India in opposition to some part of the Vedanta. That had to be answered, and we will see how, later on, it could only be answered by Advaitism and by nothing else. We will see also how, in spite of people's curious notions about Advaitism, people's fright about Advaitism, it is the salvation of the world, because therein alone is the reason of things. Dualism and other things are very good as means of worship, very satisfying to the mind, may be it has helped the mind onward; but if man wants to be rational and religious at the same time, Advaita is the one system in the world for him. Well, now, the mind is a similar river, continually emptying itself at one end, and filling itself at

the other end. Where is that unity which we call the *atman*? The idea was this, that, in spite of this continuous change in the body, and in spite of this continuous change in the mind, our ideas are unchangeable, our ideas of things are unchangeable; therefore, as rays of light coming from different quarters, if they fall upon a screen, or a wall, or upon something that is not changeable, then and then alone it is possible for them to form a unity, then and then alone it is possible for them to form one complete whole. Where is this unity in the human organs, falling upon which, as it were, the various ideas will come to unity and become one complete whole? This certainly cannot be the mind; seeing that it also changes. Therefore there must be something which is neither the body nor the mind, that which changes not, the unchangeable, upon which all our ideas, our sensations fall to form a unity, and a complete whole, and this is the real soul, the *atman* of man. And seeing that everything material, either you call it fine matter, or mind, must be changeful; seeing that what you call gross matter, the external world, must also be changeful in comparison to that; this unchangeable something can no more be of material substance; therefore it is spiritual; that is to say, it is not matter, indestructible, unchangeable.

Next will come the question—apart from those old arguments which only rise in the external world, the arguments from Design—who created this external world, who created matter, &c.? The idea here is to know truth only from the inner nature of man, and the question arises just in the same way as it arose about the soul; taking for granted that there is a soul, unchangeable, in each man, which is neither the mind, nor the body, there is still a unity of idea among the souls, a unity of feeling, of sym-

pathy. How is it possible that my soul can act upon your soul, where is the medium through which it can work, where is the medium through which it can act? How is it I can feel anything about your soul? What is it that is in touch both with your soul, and with my soul? Therefore there is a metaphysical necessity of admitting another soul, for it must be a soul which acts in contact with all the different souls and in matter; one soul which covers and interpenetrates all the infinite number of souls in the world, in and through which it lives, in and through which it sympathises, and loves, and works for one another. And this universal soul is *Paramatman*, the Lord God of the universe. Again, it follows that because the soul is not made of matter, since it is spiritual, it cannot obey the laws of matter, it cannot be judged by the laws of matter. It is therefore deathless and changeless—*Nainam chhindanti sastrani, &c.* "This Self the fire cannot burn, nor instruments pierce, the sword cannot cut it asunder, the air cannot dry it up, nor the water melt; unconquerable, deathless, and birthless is this Self of man." What is this Self doing then? We have known that according to Gita and according to Vedanta, this individual Self is also *vibhu*, is, according to Kapila, omnipresent. Of course there are sects in India according to which this Self is *anu*; but what they mean is *anu* in manifestation; its real nature is *vibhu*.

There comes another idea, startling perhaps, yet a characteristically Indian idea, and if there is any idea that is common to all our sects it is this. Therefore I beg you to pay attention to this one idea and to remember it, for this is the very foundation of everything that we have in India. The idea is this. You have heard of the doctrine of physical evolution preached in the Western world, by

the German and the English savants. It tells us that the bodies of the different animals are really one, the differences that we see are but different expressions of the same series, that from the lowest worm to the highest and the most saintly man it is but one, the one changing into the other and so on, going up and up, higher and higher, until it obtains perfection. We had that also. Declares our Yogi Patanjali, *Jatyantra parinamah* one species—the *jati* is a species—changes into another species, evolution; *parinamah* means one thing changing into another, just as one species changes into another. Where do we differ from the Europeans? *Prakrityapurat*, "By the infilling of Nature." The European says it is competition, natural and sexual selection, &c., that forces one body to take the form of another. But here is another idea, a still better analysis, going deeper into the thing, and saying—"By the infilling of nature." What is meant by this infilling of nature? We admit that the amœba goes higher and higher until it becomes a Buddha; we admit that, but we are, at the same time, as much certain that you cannot get any amount of work out of a machine until you put it in on the other side. The sum total of energy remains the same, whatever the form it may take. If you want a mass of energy at one end you have got to put it in at the other end, it may be in another form, but the amount must be the same. Therefore, if a Buddha is the one end of the change, the very amœba must have been the Buddha also. If the Buddha is the evolved amœba, the amœba was the involved Buddha also. If this universe is the manifestation of an almost infinite amount of energy, when this universe was in a state of *pralaya* it must have been the involved amount of energy. It cannot have been otherwise. As such it, follows that every soul is infinite.

From the lowest worm that crawls under our feet to the noblest and greatest saints, all have this infinite power, infinite purity, and infinite everything. Only, the difference is in the degree of manifestation. The worm is only manifesting just a little bit of that energy; you have manifested more, another god-man has manifested still more; that is all the difference. But it is there all the same. Says Patanjali :—

Tatah kshetrikavat.

"Just as the peasant irrigating his field." He has got a little corner that comes into his field and brings water from a reservoir somewhere, and perhaps he has got a little lock that prevents the water from rushing into his field. When he wants water he has simply to open the lock and in rushes the water out of its own power. The power has not to be added, it is already there in the reservoir. So, everyone of us, every being has as his own background, such a reservoir of strength, infinite power, infinite purity, infinite bliss, and existence infinite; only these locks, these bodies are hindering us from expressing what we really are to the fullest. And as these bodies become more and more finely organised, as the *tamasa guna* becomes the *rajasa guna*, and as the *rajasa guna* becomes *satwa guna*, more and more of this power and purity becomes manifest; and therefore it has been that our people have been so careful about eating and drinking and the food question. It may be that the ideas have been lost, just as with our child-marriage—which, though not belonging to the subject I may take as an example; if I have another opportunity I will talk to you of these,but the ideas behind child-marriage are the only ideas through which there can be a real civilization. There cannot be anything else. Just if a

man or a woman were allowed the freedom to take up any man or woman as his wife or her husband, if individual pleasure, if satisfaction of animal instincts, were to be allowed to run loose in society, the result must be evil, evil children, wicked and demoniacal. Aye, man in every country is, on the one hand, producing these brutal children, and on the other hand multiplying the police force to keep these brutes down. The question is not how to destroy evil that way, but how to prevent the very birth of evil, and so long as you live in society your marriage certainly affects me and everyone else, and therefore, society has the right to dictate whom you shall marry, and whom you shall not. And such great ideas have been behind the system of child-marriage here; what they call the astrological *jati* of the bride and bridegroom. And in passing I may remark that according to Manu a child who is born of lust is not an Aryan. The child whose very conception and whose death is according to the rules of the Vedas, such is an Aryan. Yes, and less of these Aryan children are being produced in every country, and the result is the mass of evil which we call *Kali Yuga.* But we have lost all this; it is true we cannot carry all these ideas to the fullest length now, it is perfectly true we have made almost a caricature of some of these great ideas. It is perfectly true that the fathers and mothers are not what they were in old times, neither is society so educated as it used to be, neither has society that love for individuals that it used to have. But, however the working out may be, the principle is sound, and if one work has become defective, if one idea has failed, take it up, and work it out better; why kill the principle? The same applies to the food question; the work and details are bad, very bad, indeed, but that does not hurt the prin-

ciple. The principle is eternal and must be there. Work it out afresh, and make a reform application.

This is the one great idea of the *atman* in India which every one of our sects has got to believe, only, as we will find, the Dualists preach that this *atman* by evil works becomes *sankocha*, all its powers and its nature become contracted, and by good works again that nature expands. And the Advaitist says that the *atman* never expands or contracts, but seems to do so, it appears to have become contracted. That is all the difference, but all have the one idea that our *atman* has all the powers already, not that anything will come to it from outside, not that anything will drop into it from the skies. Mark you, your Vedas are not inspired, but expired, not that they came from anywhere outside, but they are eternal laws living in every soul. The Vedas are in the soul of the ant, in the soul of the god. The ant has only to evolve and get the body of a sage or a Rishi, and the Vedas will come out, eternal laws expressing themselves. This is one great idea to understand, that our power was already ours, our salvation is already inside. Say either that it has become contracted, or say that it has been covered with the veil of *maya*, it matters little ; the idea is there already : you must have to believe in that, believe in the possibility of everybody, even in the lowest man there is the same possibility as in the Buddha. This is the doctrine of the *atman*.

But now comes a tremendous fight. Here are the Buddhists, who equally analyse the body into a material stream, and as equally analyse the mind into another. And as about this *atman* they state that it is unnecessary, we need not assume the *atman* at all. What use of a substance and qualities adhering to the substance ? We say *gunas*, qualities, and qualities alone. It is illogical to

assume two causes where one will explain the whole thing. And the fight went on, and all the theories which held the doctrine of substance were thrown on the ground by the Buddhists. There was a break-up all along the line of all those who held on to the doctrine of substance and qualities that you have a soul, and I have a soul, and every one has a soul separate from the mind and body—and each one individual. So far we have seen that the idea of Dualism is all right, for there is the body, there is then the fine mind, there is this *atman*, and in and through all the *atmans* is that *paramatman*, God. The difficulty is here, that this *atman* and *paramatman* are both so-called substance, to which the mind and body and so-called substances adhere like so many qualities. Nobody has ever seen a substance, none can ever conceive; what is the use of thinking of this substance? Why not become a *Kshanika*, and say that whatever exists is this succession of mental currents and nothing more. They do not adhere to each other, they do not form a unit, one is chasing the other, like waves in the ocean, never complete, never forming one unit whole. Man is a succession of waves, and when one goes away it generates another and so on, and the cessation of these wave forms is what is called Nirvana. You see that Dualism is mute before this, it is impossible that it can bring up any argument, and the Dualistic God also cannot be retained here. The idea of a God that is omnipresent, and yet is a person who creates without hands, and moves without feet, and so on, and who has created the universe as a *kumbhakara** creates a *ghata*† the Buddhist declares that if this is God he is going to fight this God and not worship it. This universe is full of misery; if it is the work of a God, we are going to fight this God. And

* Potter. † Pot.

secondly, this God is illogical and impossible, as all of you are aware. We need not go into the defects of the Design people as all our *Kshanikas* had to declare, and so this personal God fell to pieces. Truth, and nothing but truth, you declare is your one word; *Satyameva jayati.*

"Truth alone triumphs, and not untruth." Through truth alone the way to Devayanam lies. Everybody marches forward under that banner; aye, but it is only to smash weak man's position under his own. You come with your Dualistic idea of God to pick up a quarrel with a poor man who is worshiping an image, and you think you are wonderfully rational, you can break him up and if he turns round and smashes up your own personal God, and calls that an imaginary ideal, where are you? You fall back on faith and so on, or raise up the cry of atheism, the old cry of weak man—whosoever defeats him is an atheist. If you are to be rational, be rational all along the line, and if not allow others the same privilege which you ask for yourselves. How can you prove the existence of this God? On the other hand, it can be disproved almost. There is not a shadow of proof as to his existence, and there is some proof to the contrary. How will you prove his existence with your God, and his *gunas*, and an infinite number of souls which are substance and each soul an individual? In what are you an individual? You are not as a body, for you know to-day better than even the Buddhists of old knew that what may have been matter in the sun has just now become matter in you, and just now will go out and become matter in the plants, where is your individuality, you Mr. so and so? The same applies to the mind. Where is your individuality? You have one thought to-night and another to-morrow. You do not think the same way as you thought when you were a child, and old men

do not think the same way as they did when they were young. Where is your individuality? Do not say it is in consciousness, this *ahankara*, because this only covers a small part of your existence. While I am talking to you all my organs are working and I am not conscious of it. If consciousness is the proof of existence they do not exist then, because I am not conscious of them. Where are you then with your personal God theories? How can you prove such a God? Again, the Buddhists will stand up and declare, not only is it illogical, but immoral, for it teaches man to be a coward and to seek assistance outside, and nobody can give him such help. Here is the universe, man made it, why, then, depend on an imaginary being outside whom nobody ever saw and felt, or got help from? Why then do you make cowards of yourselves, and teach your children that the highest state of man is to be a dog, to go crawling before this imaginary being, saying that you are weak and impure and that you are everything vile in this universe? On the other hand the Buddhists may urge not only that you tell a lie, but that you bring a tremendous amount of evil upon your children, for, mark you, this world is one of hypnotisation. Whatever you tell yourself that you believe. Almost the first words the great Buddha uttered were—"What you think, that you are, what you shall think, that you shall be." If it is true, do not teach yourselves that you are nothing, aye, that you cannot do anything unless you are helped by somebody who does not live here, who sits above the damp clouds. The result will be that you will be more and more weakened everyday; the result will be, "We are very impure, Lord make us pure," and you will hypnotise yourselves that way into all sorts of vices. Aye, the Buddhists say that 90 per

cent. of these vices that you see in every society are on account of this idea of a personal God, and becoming a dog before him, this awful idea of the human being that the end and aim of this expression of life, this wonderful expression of life, is to become a dog. Says the Buddhist to the Vaishnavist, if your ideal, your aim and goal is to go to a place called *Vaikunta* where God lives, and there stand before him with folded hands all through eternity, it is better to commit suicide than do that. The Buddhist may urge that that is why he is going to create annihilation *Nirvana*, to escape this. I am putting these ideas before you as a Buddhist just for the time being, because now-a-days all these Advaitic ideas are said to make you immoral, and I am trying to tell you how the other side looks. Let us see both sides boldly and bravely. We have seen first of all that this cannot be proved, the idea of a personal God creating the world; is there any child that can believe this to-day? Because a *kumbhakara* creates a *ghata*, therefore a God created the world. If this is so, then your *kumbkakara* is a God also, and if any one tells you that he acts without head and hands you may take him to a lunatic asylum. Has ever your God, the Creator of the world, personal God and all that to whom you can cry all your life, helped you, and what help have you got? is the next challenge from modern science. They will prove that any help you have got could have been got by your own exertions, and better still, you need not have spent your energy in that crying, you could have done it, better without that weeping and crying at all. And we have seen that along with this idea of a personal God comes tyranny and priestcraft. Tyranny and priestcraft, have been everywhere where this idea existed and until the lie is knocked on the head, say the Buddhists,

tyranny will not cease. So long as man thinks he has to cower before another strong being, there will be priests to claim rights and privileges and to make men cower before them, these poor men will continue to ask a priest to stand as interceders for them. You may knock the Brahmin on the head, but mark me that those who do so will stand in their place, and will be worse, because these have a certain amount of generosity in them, and these upstarts are the worst of tyrannisers always. If a beggar gets wealth, he thinks the whole world is a bit of straw. So these priests there will be, so long as this personal God idea will be, and it will be impossible to think of any great morality in society. Priestcraft and tyranny will go hand in hand and why was it invented? Because some strong men in old times got people in their hands and said you must obey us or we will destroy you. That was the long and short of it—*Subhayam vajramudyatum.*

It is the idea of a thunderer, who kills everyone who does not obey him, and so on. Next the Buddhist says you have been so rational up to this that you say that everything is the result of the law of *karma*. You all believe in an infinite of souls, and that souls are without birth or death, and this infinity of souls and the belief in the law of *karma*, is perfect logic no doubt. There cannot be a cause without an effect, the present must have had its cause in the past, and will have its effect in the future. The Hindu says the *karma* is *jada* and not *chaitanya*, therefore some *chaitanya* is necessary to bring this cause to fruition. Is it that *chaitanya* is necessary to bring the plant to fruition? If I add water and plant the seed, no *chaitanya* is necessary. You may say there was some original *Chaitanya*, but the souls themselves were the *Chaitanya*, none else is necessary. If human souls have it too, what necessity

is there for a God, as the Jains say, who believe in souls unlike the Buddhists, and do not believe in God. Where are you logical, where are you moral? And when you try to criticise that advaitism will make for immorality, just read a little of what has been done in India by Dualistic sects, and what has been brought before law courts. If there have been twenty thousand Advaitist blackguards, there wlll be twenty thousand Dwaitist blackguards. Generally speaking, there will be more Dwaitist blackguards, because it takes a better type of mind to understand it (Advaitism), and they can scarcely be frightened into anything. What stands for you then? There is no help out of the clutches of the Buddhist. You may quote the Vedas, but he does not believe in them. He will say, "my *Tripetakas* say no, and they are without beginning or end, not even written by Buddha, for Buddha says he is only reciting them; they are eternal." And he adds that yours are wrong, ours are the true Vedas, yours are manufactured by the Brahmin priests, out with them. How do you escape?

Here is the way to get out. Take up the first objection, the metaphysical one, that substance and qualities are different. Says the Advaitist they are not. There is no difference between substance and qualities. You know the old illustration, how the rope is taken for the snake, and when you see the snake you do not see the rope at all, the rope has vanished. Dividing the thing into substance and quality is metaphysical something in the brains of philosophers, never can there be an effect outside. You see substance if you are an ordinary man, and qualities if you are a great *yogi*, but you never see both at the same time. So Buddhists, your quarrel about substance and qualities has been but a miscalculation which does not

stand in fact. But, if the substance is unqualified, there can only be one. If you take qualities off from the soul, and show that these qualities are in the mind, really superimposed on the soul, then there can never be two souls, for it is qualification that makes the difference between one soul and another. How do you know that one soul is different from the other? Owing to certain differentiating marks, certain qualities. And where qualities do not exist, how can there be differentiation? Therefore there are not two souls, there is but one, and your *paramatman* is unnecessary, it is this very soul. That one is called *paramatman*, that very one is called *jivatman*, and so on; and you Dualists, such as Sankhya and others, who say that the soul is omnipresent, *vibhu*, how can there be two infinites? There can be only one. What else? This one is the one infinite Atman, everything else is its manifestation. There the Buddhist stops, but there it does not end. The Advaitist position is not like weak positions, only one of criticism. The Advaitist criticises others when they come too near him, just throws them away, that is all, but he propounds his own position. He is the only one that criticises, and does not stop with criticism and showing books. Here you are, you say the universe is a thing of continuous motion. In *vayasthi* everything is moving, you are moving, the table is moving, motion everywhere, *samsara*: continuous motion, it is *jagat* Therefore, there cannot be an individuality in this *jagat*, because individuality means that which does not change, there cannot be any changeful individuality, it is a contradiction in terms. There is [no] such thing as individuality in this little world of ours, the *jagat*. Thought and feeling, mind and body, beasts and animals and so on, are in a continuous state of flux. But suppose you take the

universe as a unit whole; can it change or move? Certainly not. Motion is possible in comparison with something which is a little less in motion or entirely motionless. The universe as a whole, therefore, is motionless, unchangeable. You are, therefore, an individual then and then alone, when you are the whole of it, when "I am the universe." That is why the Vedantist says that so long as there are two, fear does not cease. It is only when one does not see another, does not feel another, it is only one, then alone death ceases, then alone death vanishes, then alone *samsara* vanishes. Advaita teaches us therefore that man is individual in being universal, and in not being particular. You are immortal only when you are the whole. You are fearless and deathless when you are the universe, and then that which you call the universe is the same that you call God, the same that you are existent, the same that you are the whole. It is the one undivided existence which is taken to be as we see it by people having the same state of mind as we have, looking upon this universe as we see it, suns, and moons, and so on. People who have done a little better *karma*, and get another state of mind, when they die look upon it as *suarga*, and see Indras and so forth. People still higher will see it, the very same thing as Brahma Loka, and the perfect ones will neither see the earth nor the heavens, nor any *loka* at all. This universe will have vanished and Brahman will be in its stead.

Can we know this Brahman? I have told you of the painting of the infinite in the Samhita. Here we shall find another side taken, the infinite internal. That was infinite of the muscles. Here we shall have the infinite of thought. There the infinite was attempted to be painted in language positive; here that language failed, and the attempt has been to paint it in language negative. Here

is this universe, and even admitting that it is Brahman, can we know it? No! No! You must understand this one thing again very clearly. Again and again this doubt will come to you, if this is Brahman how can we know it? *Vijnataramare kena vijaniyat.* "By what, O Maitreyi, the knower can be known; how can the knower be known?" The eyes see everything; can they see themselves? They cannot, because the very fact of knowledge is a degradation. Children of Aryas, you must remember this, for herein lies a big story. All the Western temptations that come to you have their metaphysical basis on that one thing, there is nothing higher than sense knowledge. In the East, we say in our Vedas that this knowledge is lower than the thing itself, because it is always a limitation, when you want to know a thing, it immediately becomes limited by your mind. They say, refer back to that instance of the oyster making pearls and see how knowledge is limitation, gathering a thing, bringing it into consciousness, and not knowing it as a whole. This is true about all knowledge, and can you do that to the infinite? Can you do that to Him who is the substance of all knowledge, Him who is the *Sakshi*, the witness, without which you cannot have any knowledge, Him who has no qualities, who is the witness of the whole universe, the witness in our own souls? How can you know Him? By what means can you bind Him up? Everything, the whole universe, is such a false attempt. As it were this infinite Atman is trying to see his own face, and all the animals, from the lowest to the highest of gods, are like so many mirrors to reflect himself in, and he is taking up others, finding them insufficient, and so on, until in the human body he gets to know it is finite of the finite, all is finite, there cannot be any expression of the infinite in the finite. Then comes the retrograde

march, and this is what is called renunciation, *vairagya*. Back from the senses, back, do not go to the senses, is the watchword of *vairagya*. This is the watchword of all morality, this is the watchword of all well-being, for you must remember that the universe begins in *tapasya*, in renunciation; and as you go back and back, all the forms are being manifested before you, and they are left aside one after the other until you remain what you really are. This is *moksha*, or liberation.

This idea we have to understand—*Vijnataram kena vijaniyat*. "How to know the knower;" the knower cannot be known, because if it were known it will not be the knower. If you look at your eyes in a reflecting mirror, the reflection is no more your eyes, but something else, only a reflection. Then if this Soul, this universal, infinite being which you are, is only a witness, what good is it? It cannot live, and move about, and enjoy the world, as we do. People cannot understand how the witness can enjoy. "Oh you Hindus have become quiescent, and good for nothing, through such a doctrine that you are witnesses." First of all it is only the witness that can enjoy. If there is a kusti, who enjoys it, those who are playing, or those who are looking on outside? The more and more you are the witness of anything in life, the more you enjoy it. And this is *anandam*, and therefore infinite bliss can only be when you have become the witness of this universe, then alone you are a *mukta*. It is the witness alone that can work without any desire, without any idea of going to heaven, without any idea of blame, without any idea of praise. The witness alone enjoys, and none else.

Coming to the moral aspect, there is one thing between the metaphysical and the moral aspect of Advaitism; it is the theory of *maya*. Everyone of these points in the

Advaita system requires years to understand and months to tell. Therefore you will excuse me if I only just touch them *en passant*. This theory of *maya* has been the most difficult thing to understand in all ages. Let me tell you in a few words that it is surely no theory, it is the combination of the three ideas *Desa-kala-nimitta*—Time, space, and causation—and which time and space and cause have been further reduced into *nama rupa*. Suppose there is a wave in the ocean. The wave is distinct from the ocean only in its form and name, and these form and name cannot have any separate existence from the wave; they exist only with the wave. The wave may subside, but the same amount of water remains, even if the name and form that were on the wave vanish for ever. So this *maya* is what makes the difference between me and you, between all animals and man, between gods and men. In fact it is this *maya* that causes the *Atman* to be caught, as it were, in so many millions of beings, and this is only name and form. If you leave it alone, let name and form go, it vanishes for ever, and you are what you really are. This is *maya*. It is again no theory, but a statement of facts. Just as the realist states that this world exists; what he means, the ignorant man, the realists, children and so forth is that this table has an independent existence of its own, that it does not depend on the existence of anything else in the universe, and if this whole universe be destroyed and annihilated this table will remain as it is just now. A little knowledge shows you that cannot be. Everything here in the sense world is dependent and inter-dependent, relative and co-relative, the existence of one depending on the other. There are three steps, therefore, in our knowledge of things; the first is that each thing is individual and separate from every other; and the next step is to find

that there is a relation and co-relation between all things; and the next is that there is only one thing which we see as many. The first idea of God of the ignorant is that this God is somewhere outside of the universe, that is to say, the conception of God is extremely human; just He does what a man does, only on a bigger scale. And we have seen how that God is proved in a few words to be unreasonable and insufficient. And the next idea is the idea of a power we see manifested everywhere. This is the real personal God we get in the *Chandi* but, mark me, not a God that you make the reservoir of all good qualities only. You cannot have two gods, God and Satan; you must have only one, and dare to call Him good and bad, but have only one, and take the logical consequences.

"Thus we salute Thee, Oh Goddess, who lives in every being as peace; who lives in all beings as purity." At the same time we must take the whole consequence of it. "All this bliss, Oh Gargi, wherever there is bliss there is a portion of Thee." You may use it how you like. In this light before me you may try to give a poor man a hundred rupees, and another man will forge your name, but the light will be the same for both. This is the second stage; and the third is that the God is neither outside nature nor inside nature, but God and Nature and soul and universe are all convertible terms. You never see two things; it is your metaphysical words that have deluded you. You assume that you are a body and have a soul, and that you are both together. How can that be? Try in your own mind. If there is a *yogi* among you, he thinks of himself as *chaitanya*, the body has vanished. If ordinary man, he thinks of himself as a body; the idea of spirit has vanished; but because the metaphysical ideas exist that man has a body and a soul and all these things, you think

they are all simultaneously there. One thing at a time. Do not talk of God when you see matter; you see the effect and the effect alone, and the cause you cannot see, and the moment you can see the cause the effect will have vanished. Where is this world, and who has taken it off?

"One that is formless and limitless, beyond all compare, beyond all qualities, Oh sage, Oh learned man, such a Brahman will shine in your heart in *samadhi*."

"Where all the changes of nature cease for ever, thought beyond all thoughts, whom the Vedas declare, who is the essence in what we call our existence, such a Brahman will manifest himself in you in *samadhi*."

"Beyond all birth and death, the Infinite one, incomparable, like the whole universe deluged in water in *mahapralaya*, water above, water beneath, water on all sides, and on the face of that water not a wave, not a ripple, silent and calm, all visions have died out, all fights and quarrels and the war of fools and saints have ceased for ever; such a Brahman will shine in your hearts in *samadhi*." That also comes, and when that comes the world has vanished.

We have seen this, that this Brahman, this reality is unknown and unknowable, not in the sense of the agnostic, but because to know Him would be a blasphemy, because you are it already. We have also seen that this Brahman is not this table and yet this table. Take off the name and form, and whatever is reality is He. He is the reality in everything.

"Thou art in the woman, thou the man, thou the young man walking in the pride of youth, thou the old man tottering on his stick, thou art all in all, in every thing, and I am thee, I am thee." That is the theme of Advaitism. A few words more. Herein lies, we find, the explanation of

the essence of things. We have seen how here alone we can take a firm stand against all the onrush of logic and scientific knowledge and so forth. Here at last reason has a firm foundation, and, at the same time, the Indian Vedantist does not curse the preceding steps; he looks back and he blesses them, and he knows that they were true, only wrongly perceived, and wrongly stated. They were the same things, only seen through the glass of *maya* distorted, it may be, yet truth, and nothing but truth. The same God whom the ignorant man saw outside nature, the same whom the little-knowing man saw was interpenetrating the universe, and the same whom the sage realises as his own self, and the whole universe itself, all are the one and the same being, the same entity, seen from different standpoints of view, seen through different glasses of *maya*, perceived by different minds, and all the difference was caused by that. Not only so, but one must lead to the other. What is the difference between science and common knowledge? Go out into one of these streets, and if something is happening there ask one of the *gonwars* (boors) there. It is ten to one that he will tell you it is a ghost causing the phenomenon. He is always going after ghosts and spirits outside, because it is the nature of ignorance to seek for causes outside of effects. If a stone falls it has been thrown by a devil or a ghost, says the ignorant man, and the scientific man says it is the law of Nature, the law of gravitation.

What is the fight between science and religion everywhere? Religions are encumbered with such a mass of explanations which are outside—one angel is in charge of the sun, another of the moon, and so on *ad infinitum*, and every change is caused by a ghost, the one common thing of which is that they are all outside the thing; and

science means that the cause of a thing is sought out by the nature of the thing itself. As bit by bit science is progressing, it has taken the explanation out of the hands of ghosts and demons, and therefore Advaitism is the most scientific religion. This universe has not been created by any outside God, nor is it the work of any outside genius, self-created, self-dissolved, self-manifesting, one infinite existence, the Brahman, the *Tat twam asi*,—O Svetaketu, "Thou that art." Thus you see that this, and this alone, none else, can be the only scientific religion, and with all the prattle about science that is going on daily at the present time in modern half-educated India, with all the talk about rationalism and reason that I hear every day, I expect that whole sects of you will come over and dare to be Advaitists, and dare to preach it to the world in the words of Buddha, "for the good of many, for the happiness of many." If you do not, I take you for cowards. If your cowardice has existence, if your fear is your excuse, allow the same liberty unto others, do not try to break up the poor idol-worshipper, do not try to call him a devil, do not go about preaching unto every man that does not agree entirely with you; know first that you are cowards yourselves, and if Society frightens you, if your own superstitions of the past frighten you so much, how much more will these superstitions frighten them and bind them down who are ignorant. That is the Advaitist' position. Have mercy on others. Would to God that the whole world were Advaitists to-morrow, not only in theory, but in realisation; but if that cannot be, let us do the next best thing, take them all by the hands, lead them always step by step just as they can go, and know that every step in all religious growth in India has been progressive. It is not from bad to good, but from good to better.

Something more has to be told as about the moral relation. Our boys blithely talk now-a-days, they learn from somebody—Lord knows from whom—that Advaitists will make people all immoral, because if we are all one and all God, we need not be moral at all. In the first plaee, that is the argument of the brute, who can only be kept down by the whip. If you are such a brute, commit suicide first, rather than be such human beings, if they are to be kept down by the whip. If the whip goes away, you will all be demons! You ought all to be just killed here if such is the case; there is no help for you; you must always be living under this whip and rod, and there is no salvation, no escape for you. In the second place, this and this alone explains morality. Every religion preaches that the essence of all morailty is to do good unto others. And why? Be unselfish. And why? Some god has said it. He is not for me. Some texts have told it. Let them all tell it; that is nothing to me; let them all tell it. And if they do, what is it? Each one for himself, and somebody for the hindermost, that is all the morality in the world, at least with many. What is the reason why I should be moral? You cannot explain it except when you come to know.

"He who sees everyone in himself, and himself in everyone, thus seeing the same god living in all in the same manner, the sage no more kills the self by the self." Know through Advaita that whomever you hurt you hurt yourself; they are all you. Whether you know it or not through all hands you work, through all feet you move, you are the king enjoying in the palace, you are the beggar leading that miserable existence in the street, you are in the ignorant as well as in the learned, you are in the man who is weak, and you are in the strong; know this and be sympathetic. And that is why we must not hurt others.

That is even why I do not care whether I have got to starve, because there will be millions of mouths eating at the same time, and they are all mine. Therefore I should not care what becomes of me and mine, for the whole universe is mine, I am enjoying all the bliss at the same time; and who can kill me, and the universe? Herein Advaita alone is morality. The others teach it, but cannot give you its reason. Then so far about explanation.

What is the gain? This is to be heard first—*s'rotavyah mantavyah nididhyasitavyah.* Take off that veil of hypnotism which you have cast upon the world, send not out thoughts and words of weakness unto humanity. Know that all sins and all evils can be summed up into that one word weakness. It is weakness that is the motive power in all evil doing; it is weakness that is the motive power in all wrong acts; it is weakness that makes men do what they ought not to do; it is weakness that makes them manifest as they are not really. Let them all know what they are; let them tell day and night what they are. *Soham*—Let them suck it with their mothers' milk, this idea of strength—I am He, I am He. And then let them think of it, and out of that thought, out of that heart will proceed works such as the world has never seen. What has to be done? Aye, this Advaitism is said by some to be impracticable? that is to say, it is not yet manifesting itself on the material plane. To a certain extent it is true, for, remember the saying of the Vedas—*Omityekaksharam Brahma Omityekaksharam param.* "Om, this is the great secret; Om, this is the great possession; he who knows the secret of this Om, whatever he desires that he gets." Aye, therefore, first know the secret of this Om, that you are the Om; know the secret of this *Tattwam asi* and then, and then alone, whatever you want

shall come to you. If you want to be great materially, believe that you are so. I may be a little bubble, and you may be a wave mountain-high, but know that for both of us the infinite ocean is the back-ground, the infinite God is our magazine of power and strength, and we can draw as much as we like, both of us, the bubble and you the mountain-high wave. Believe, therfore, in yourselves, The secret of Advaita is—Believe in yourselves first, and then believe in anything else. In the history of the world, you will find that only those nations that have believed in themselves have become great and strong. In the history of each nation, you will always find that individuals that have believed in themselves have become great and strong. Here, in this India, came an Englishman, who was only a clerk, and for want of funds and other reasons he tried to blow his brains out twice, and when he failed he believed in himself that he was born to do great things, and that man became Lord Clive, the founder of the Empire. If he had believed the *padris* and gone crawling all his life—"Oh Lord, I am weak, and I am low"—where would he have been? In a lunatic asylum. They have made lunatics of you with these evil teachings. I have seen all the world over the bad effects of these weak teachings of humility, destroying the human race. Our children are brought up in this way, and is it a wonder that they become semi-lunatics as they are?

This is on the practical side. Believe, therefore, in yourselves, and if you want material wealth, work it out; it will come to you. If you want to be intellectual let it work out on the intellectual plane, and intellectual giants you shall be. And if you want to attain to freedom let it work out on the spiritual plane, and gods you shall be.

"Enter into *Nirvana*, the blissful." The defect was here; so long the Advaita has only been worked on the spiritual plane, and that was all; now the time has come when you have to make it practical. It shall no more be a *rahasya*, a secret, it shall no more live with monks in caves and forests, and in the Himalayas; it must come down to the daily, every day life of the people; it shall be worked out in the palace of the king, in the cave of the recluse. it shall be worked out in the cottage of the poor, by the beggar in the street, everywhere, anywhere it can be worked out. For is not the Gita with us ?—*Svalpamapyasya dharmasya trayate mahato bhayat.* Therefore, do not fear whether you are a woman or a Sudra, or anything, for this religion is so great, says Lord Krishna, that even the least done brings a great amount of good. Therefore, children of the Aryans, do not sit idle, awake and arise, and stop not till the goal is reached. The time has come when this Advaita is to be worked out practically. Let us bring it down from heaven unto the earth; this is the present dispensation. Aye, the voices of our forefathers of old are telling us to stop—stop there, my children. Let your teachings come down lower and lower until they have permeated the world, till they have entered into every pore of society, till they have become the common property of everybody, till they have become part and parcel of our lives, till they have entered into our veins and tingle with every drop of blood there. Aye, you may be astonished to hear, but as practical Vedantists the Europeans are better than we are. I used to stand on the sea-side of New York, and look at the emigrants coming from different countries, crushed, down trodden, hopeless with a little bundle of clothes all their possession, their clothes all in rags, unable to look a man in the face; if they saw a policeman they were afraid and

tried to get to the other side of the footpath. And, mark you, in six months those very men were walking erect, well clothed, looking everybody in the face; and what makes this wonderful difference? Say this man comes from Armenia, or anywhere else where he was crushed down beyond all recognition, where everybody told him he was a born slave and born to remain in his low state all his life, and the least move he made they would crush him out. There everything told him, "Slave; you are a slave, remain there. Hopeless you were born, hopeless remain." Even the very air murmured round him. "There is no hope for you, hopeless and a slave remain;" where the strong man crushed the life out of him. And when he landed in the streets of New York he found a gentleman, well-dressed, shaking him by the hand; it made no difference that the one was in rags, and the other well clad. He went a step further and saw a restaurant, that there were gentlemen dining at a table, and he was asked to take a seat at the corner of the same table. He went about, and found a new life, that there was a place where he was a man among men. Perhaps he went to Washington, shook hands with the President of the United States, and, perhaps, there he saw men coming from distant villages, peasants, and ill-clad, all shaking hands with the President. Then the veil of *maya* slipped away from him. He is Brahman, who has been hypnotised into slavery and weakness, once more awake, and he rises up and finds himself a man in a world of men. Aye, in this country of ours, the very birthplace of the Vedanta, our masses have been hypnotised for ages into that very state. To touch them is pollution! To sit with them is pollution! Hopeless you were born; remain hopeless; and the result is that they have been sinking, sinking, sinking, and have

come to the last stage to which a human being can come. For what country is there in the world where man has to sleep with the cattle? And for this blame nobody else, do not commit the mistake of the ignorant. The effect is here and the cause is here too. We are to blame. Stand up, be bold, and take the blame on your own shoulders. Do not go about throwing mud at others; for all the faults you suffer you are the sole and only cause.

Young men of Lahore, understand this, therefore,—this great sin, hereditary and national, is on your shoulders. There is no hope for us. You may make thousands of societies, twenty thousand political assemblages, fifty thousand institutions. These will be of no use until there is that sympathy, that love, that heart, that thinks for all, until Buddha's heart comes once more into India, until the words of Lord Krishna are brought to their practical use there is no hope for us. You go on imitating the Europeans and their societies and their assemblages, but let me tell you a story, a fact that I saw with my own eyes. A company of Burmans was taken over to London by some persons here, who turned out to be Eurasians. They exhibited these people in London, took all the money, and then took these Burmans over to the Continent, and left them there for good or evil. These poor people did not know any word of any European language, but the English Consul in Austria sent them over to London. They were helpless in London, without knowing any one. But an English lady got to know of them, took these foreigners from Burma into her own house, gave them her own clothes, her bed, and everything, and then sent the news to the newspapers. And, mark you, the next day the whole nation was, as it were, roused. Money poured in and these people were helped out, and sent back to Burma. On

this sort of sympathy are based all their political and other institutions; it is the rock foundation of love, for themselves at least. They may not love the world; they may be enemies all round, but in that country, it goes without saying, there is this great love for their own people, truth and justice and charity to the stranger at the door. I would be the most ungrateful man, if I did not always tell you how wonderfully and how hospitably I was received in every country in the West. Where is the heart here to build upon? No sooner do we start a little joint-stock company than we cheat each other, and the whole thing comes down with a crash. You talk of imitating them, and building as big a nation as they have. But where are the foundations? Ours are only sand, and therefore, the building comes down with a crash in no time. Therefore, young men of Lahore, raise once more that wonderful banner of Advaita, for on no other ground can you have that wonderful love, until you see that the same Lord is present in the same manner everywhere; unfurl that banner of love. "Arise, awake and stop not till the goal is reached." Arise, arise once more, for nothing can be done without renunciation. If you want to help others, your own self must go. Aye, in the words of the Christians—you cannot serve God and Mammon at the same time. *Vairagya*—your ancestors gave up the world for doing great things. At the present time there are men who give up the world to help their own salvation. Throw away every thing, even your own salvation, and go and help others. Aye, you are always talking bold words, but here is practical Vedanta before you. Give up this little life of yours. What matters if you die of starvation, you and I and thousands like us, so long as this nation lives. The nation is sinking, the

curse of unnumbered millions is on our heads, to whom we have been giving ditch water to drink when they have been dying of thirst and when the perennial river of water was flowing past, the unnumbered millions whom we have allowed to starve at sight of plenty, the unnumbered millions to whom we have talked of Advaita and hated with all our strength, the unnumbered millions against whom we have invented the doctrines of *lokachara*, to whom we have talked theoretically that all are the same, and all are the same, Lord, without even an ounce of practice. "Yet, my friends, it must only be in the mind; never in practice!" Aye, wipe off this blot. "Arise and awake." What matters it if this little life goes; every one has got to die, the saint or the sinner, the rich or the poor. The body never remains for anyone. Arise and awake and be perfectly sincere. Our insincerity in India is awful; what we want is character, that steadiness and character that make a man cling on to a thing like grim death.

Nindantu nitinipuna jana yadiva stuvantu.

Let the sages blame or let them praise, let Lakshmi come to-day, let her go away, let death come just now, or in hundred years; he, indeed, is the sage who does not make one false step from the path of right." Arise and awake, for the time is passing away when all our energies will be frittered away in vain talking. Arise and awake, let minor things and quarrels over little details and fights over little doctrines be thrown aside, for here is the greatest of all works, here are the sinking millions. Mark, when the Mahomedans first came into India, there were 60 millions of Hindus here: to-day there are less than 20 millions. Every day they will become less and less till the whole disappear. Let them disappear, but with them will disappear the marvellous ideas with all their defects and all

their misrepresentations, of which they still stand as representatives. And with them will disappear this marvellous Advaita, the crested jewel of all spiritual thought. Therefore, arise, awake, and with all your hands stretched out to protect the spirituality of the world. And first of all work it out for your own country. What we want is not so much spirituality as a little of bringing down of the Advaita into the material world, first bread and then religion. We stuff them too much with religion, when the poor fellows have been starving. No dogmas will satisfy the craving of hunger. There are two curses here, first our weakness, secondly our hatred, our dried-up hearts. You may talk doctrines by the millions, you may have sects by the hundreds of millions; aye, but it is nothing until you have the heart to feel, feel for them as your Veda teaches you, till you find they are parts of your own bodies, till you and they, the poor and the rich, the saint and the sinner, all are parts of one Infinite whole which you call Brahman.

Gentlemen, thus I have tried to place before you only a few of the most brilliant points of the Advaita system, and how that the time has come when it should be carried out into practice, not only in this country, but, everywhere. Modern science and its sledge hammer blows are pulverising into powder the porcelain foundations of all Dualistic religions everywhere. Not only here are the Dualists torturing texts till they will extend no longer, for texts are not India-rubber, it is not only here that they are trying to get into the nooks and corners to protect themselves, it is still more so in Europe and America. And even there something of this idea will have to go from India. It has already got there. It will have to increase and increase, and to save their civilisations too. For, in the West, the

old order of things is vanishing, giving way to a new order of things, which is the worship of gold, the worship of Mammon. Thus this old crude system of religion, was better than the modern system of religion, namely, competition and gold. No nation, however strong, can stand on such foundations, and the history of the world tells us that all that had similar foundations are dead and gone. In the first place, we have to stop the incoming of such a wave in India. Therefore, preach the Advaita to every one, so that religion may withstand the shock of modern science. Not only so, you will have to help others: your thought will help out Europe and America. But, above all, let me once more remind you that here is practical work, and the first part of that is to go down to the sinking millions of India. Take them by the hand, remembering the words of Lord Krishna :—

" Even in this life they have conquered heaven whose minds are firm fixed in this sameness, for God is pure and the same to all; therefore, such are said to be living in God."

THE VEDANTA IN ITS APPLICATION TO INDIAN LIFE.*

—:o:—

THERE is a word which has become very common as an appellation of our race and our religion. I mean the word "Hindu," which requires a little explanation in connection with what I mean by Vedanta and Vedantism. This word "Hindu" was the name that the ancient Persians used to apply to the river Sindhu. Wherever in Sanskrit there is an "S," in ancient Persian, it changes into "H," so that "Sindhu" became "Hindu"; and you are all aware how the Greeks found it hard to pronounce "H" and dropped it altogether, so that we became Indians and so on. Now this word, whatever might have been its meaning in the ancient times as the inhabitants of the other side of the Indus, has lost all its force in modern times; for all the people that live on this side of the Indus no more belong to one religion. There are the Hindus proper, the Mahomedans, the Parsees, the Christians, some Buddhists and Jains. The word "Hindu," in its literal sense, ought to include all these; but, as signifying the religion, it would not be proper to call all these Hindus. It is very hard, therefore, to find any common name for our religion seeing that this religion is a collection, so to speak, of various religions, of various ideas, of various ceremonials and forms, all gathered together almost without a name, and without a church and without an organization. The only point where, perhaps,

* A lecture delivered in Madras.

all our sects agree is here, that we all believe in the Scripture—the Vedas. This, perhaps, is certain that no man can have a right to be called a Hindu, who does not admit the supreme authority of the Vedas. All these Vedas, as all of you are aware, are divided into two portions—the Karma Kanda and the Gnana Kanda, the Karma Kanda including various sacrifices and ceremonials; of which the larger part has become disused in the present age. The Gnana Kanda, as embodying the spiritual teachings of the Vedas known as the Upanishads and the Vedanta, has always been cited as the highest authority by all our teachers, our philosophers and our writers, whether Dualist or Qualified Monist or Monist. Whatever be his philosophy or sect, every one in India has to find his authority in the Upanishads. If he cannot, his sect would be heterodox. Therefore, perhaps, the one name in modern times, which would designate every Hindu throughout the land, would be "Vedantist" or "Veidik," as you may put it; and in that sense I always use the words "Vedantism" and "Vedanta." I want to make it a little clearer, for, of late, it has become the custom of most people to identify the word Vedanta with the Adwaitic system of the Vedanta Philosophy. We all know that Adwaitism is only one branch of the various philosophic systems that have been founded on the Upanishads. The followers of the Visishtadwaitic system have as much reverence for the Upanishads as the followers of the Adwaita, and the Visishtadwaitists claim as much authority for the Vedanta as the Adwaitist. So do the Dualists; so does every other sect in India; but the word Vedantist has become somewhat identified in the popular mind with the Adwaitist, and, perhaps, with some reason; because although we have the Vedas for our Scriptures, we have

Smritis and Puranas—subsequent writings—to illustrate the doctrines of the Vedas; these, of course, have not the same weight as the Vedas. And the law is that, wherever these Puranas and Smritis differ from any part of the Sruti, the Sruti must be followed and the Smriti rejected. Now, in the expositions of the great Advaitic philosopher Sankara and the school founded by him, we find most of the authorities cited are of the Upanishads, very rarely an authority is cited from the Smritis except, perhaps, to elucidate a point which could hardly be found in the Srutis. On the other hand, other schools take more and more refuge in the Smritis and less and less in the Srutis, and, as we go to the more and more Dualistic sects, we find a proportionate quantity of the Smritis quoted, which is out of all proportion to what we should expect from a Vedantist. It is, perhaps, because these gave such predominance to the puranic authorities that the Adwaitist came to be called as Vedantist *par excellence*, if I may say so.

However it might have been, as we have seen, the word Vedanta must cover the whole ground of Indian religious life, and it being the Vedas, by all acceptance it is the most ancient literature that we have; for, whatever might be the idea of modern scholars, the Hindus are not ready to admit that parts of Vedas were written at one time and parts were written at another time. They, of course, still hold on to their belief that the whole of the Vedas were produced at the same time, rather—if I may so call it—they were never produced, that they always existed in the mind of the Lord. Thus, this is what I mean by the word Vedanta to cover the whole ground of Dualism, of Qualified Dualism and Adwaitism in India. Perhaps, we may take in parts even of Buddhism, of Jainism too, if they would come in—

for our hearts are sufficiently large. It is they that will not come in; we are ready; for upon severe analysis, you will always find that the essence of Buddhism was all borrowed from the same Upanishads: even the ethics, the so-called great and wonderful ethics of Buddhism, were word for word there, in some or other books of the Upanishads, and so all the good doctrines of the Jains were there *minus* their vagaries. In the Upanishads also, we find the germs of all the subsequent development of Indian religious thought. Sometimes it has been urged, without any ground whatsoever, that there is no idea of Bhakti in the Upanishads. Those that have been students of the Upanishads know that it is not true at all. There is enough of Bhakti in every Upanishad, if you will only seek for that; but many other ideas, which are found so fully developed in later times in the Puranas and other Smritis, are only in germ in the Upanishads. The sketch, the skeleton was there as it were. It was filled in in some of the Puranas. But there is not one full-grown Indian ideal that cannot be traced back to the same source of the Upanishads. Certain ludicrous attempts have been made by persons without much Upanishadic scholarship to trace Bhakti to some foreign source; but, as you all know, these have all been proved to be failures and all that you want of Bhakti is there, even in the Samhitas, not to speak of the Upanishads—it is there, worship and love and all the rest of that; only the ideals of Bhakti are becoming higher and higher. In the Samhita portions now and then, you find traces of that religion of fear and tribulation; in the Samhitas now and then, yon find a worshipper quaking before a Varuna or some other gods. Now and then you will find they are very much tortured by the idea of sin, but the Upanishads have no place for the

delineation of these things. There is no religion of fear in the Upanishads; it is one of Love and one of Knowledge.

These Upanishads are our Scriptures. They have been differently explained and, as I have told you already, that whenever there is a difference between subsequent puranic literature and the Vedas, the Puranas must give way. But it is at the same time true, that as a practical result, we find ourselves 90 per cent. puranics, and 10 per cent. Veidiks, even if that at all. And we also find the most contradictory usages prevailing in our midst, religious opinions which scarcely have any authority in the Scriptures of the Hindus prevailing in societies, and in many cases we find with astonishment—we read books and see—customs of the country that neither have their authority in the Vedas, authority neither in the Smritis nor in the Puranas but are simply local customs; and yet each ignorant villager thinks that if that little local custom dies out, he will no more remain a Hindu. In his mind, Vedantism and these little local customs have irrevocably become joined. In reading Scriptures it is hard for him to understand that what he was doing has not the sanction of the Scriptures and that the giving up of them will not hurt him at all, but, on the other hand, will make him a better man. Secondly, there is the other difficulty. These Scriptures of ours have been very vast. We read in the *Mahabhashya* of Patanjali, that great philological work, that the *Sama Veda* had one thousand branches. Where are they all? No body knows. So with each of the Vedas, the major portion of these books have disappeared, and it is only the minor portion that remains to us. They were all taken harge of by particular families; and either these families died out or were killed under foreign persecution or some-

how became extinct; and with them that branch of the learning of the Vedas they took charge of, became extinct also. This fact we ought to remember as it always forms the sheet-anchor in the hands of those who want to preach anything new or to defend anything even against the Vedas. Wherever we know in India there is a discussion between local custom and the Srutis, and whenever it is pointed out that the local custom is against the Scriptures, the argument that is forwarded is that it is not; that the custom existed in the branch of the Srutis which has become extinct; this has also been a custom. In the midst of all these varying methods of reading and commenting on our Scriptures, it is very difficult, indeed, to find the thread that runs through all of them; for we become convinced at once that there must be some common ground underlying all these varying divisions, and sub-divisions, there must be harmony, a common plan upon which all these little bits of buildings have been constructed, some basis common to this apparently hopeless mass of confusion which we call our religion. Else it could not have stood so long, it could not have endured so long.

Coming to our commentators again, we find another difficulty. The very same Adwaitic commentator whenever an Adwaitic text comes, preserves it just as it is; but as soon as a Dualistic text presents itself before him he tortures it if he can, brings the most queer meaning out of it. Sometimes the "Unborn" becomes a "goat,'—such wonderful changes. "Aja" the "Unborn" is explained as "Aja" a goat, to suit the commentator. The same way, if not in a still worse fashion, the texts are handled by the Dualistic commentator. Every Dualistic text is preserved, and every text that speaks of non-dualistic philosophy is tortured in any fashion they like. This Sanskrit language

is so intricate, the Sanskrit of the Vedas is so ancient and the Sanskrit philology so perfect that any amount of discussion can be carried on for ages in regard to the meaning of any word. If a Pundit takes it into his head, anybody's prattle can be made into correct Sanskrit by force of argument and quotations of text and rules. These are the difficulties in our way of understanding the Upanishads. It was given to me to live with a man who was as ardent a Dualist, as ardent an Adwaitist, as ardent a Bhakta and as ardent a Gnani. And living with this man, first put it into my head to understand the Upanishads and the text of the Scriptures from an independent and better basis than blindly following the commentators; and, in my humble opinion and in my humble researches, I came to this conclusion that these texts are not at all contradictory. So we need not have any fear of text-torturing at all! They are beautiful, aye, they are most wonderful, and they are not contradictory but wonderfully harmonious, one idea leading to the other. But the one fact I found is that in all the Upanishads you will find that they begin with Dualistic ideas, with worship and all that, and they end with a grand flourish of Adwaitic ideas.

Now, therefore, I find, in the light of this man's life that the Dualist and the Adwaitist need not fight each other; each has a place, and a great place in the national life; the Dualist must remain; he is as much part and parcel of the national religious life as the Adwaitist; one cannot exist without the other; one is the fulfilment of the other; one is the building, the other is the top; the one the root, the other the fruit and so on. Then again, any attempt to torture the texts of the Upanishads appears to me very ridiculous, for I begin to find out that the language was so wonderful; apart from all its merits as the

greatest philosophy, apart from its wonderful merit as theology as showing the path of salvation to mankind, taking Upanishadic literature, they are the most wonderful painting of sublimity that the world has. Here comes out in full force that individuality of the human mind, that introspective intuitive Hindu mind. We have paintings of sublimity elsewhere in all nations, but almost without exception, you will find that their ideal is to grasp the sublime in the muscles. Take, for instance, Milton, Dante, Homer or any of those Western poets. There are wonderfully sublime passages in them; but there it is always grasping for the senses, the muscles—muscle getting the ideal of infinite expansion, the infinite of space. We find the same attempts in the Samhita portion. You know some of those most wonderful *Riks*, where creation is described and so on; the very heights of expression of the sublime in expansion; the infinite in space is reached; but as it were they found out very soon that the Infinite cannot be reached through that way, that even the infinite space and expansion and the infinite external nature cannot express the ideas that were struggling to find expression in their minds, and they fell back upon other explanations. The language became new in the Upanishads; it is almost negative, the language sometimes chaotic, sometimes taking you beyond the senses, going half way and leaving you there, only pointing out to you something which you cannot grasp, which you cannot sense, and at the same time, you feel dead certain that it is there. What passages in the world can compare with this? (Repeated a Sanskrit verse which he translated thus) "There the sun cannot illumine, nor the moon, nor the stars, the flash of lightning cannot illumine the place, what to speak of this mortal fire." Where can you find

a more perfect expression of the whole philosophy of the world; the gist of what the Hindus ever thought, the whole dream of human salvation painted in language more wonderful, in figures more marvellous? (Quoted a Sanskrit passage and proceeded to say). Upon the same tree there are two birds of beautiful plumage, most friendly to each other, one eating the fruits, the other without eating, sitting there calm and silent; the one on the lower branch eating sweet and bitter fruits in turn and becoming happy and unhappy, but the one on the top calm and majestic; eats neither sweet not bitter, cares for neither happiness nor misery, immersed in his own glory. This is the picture of the human soul. Man is eating the sweets and bitters of this life, pursuing gold, pursuing his senses, pursuing the vanities of life, hopelessly, madly careering he goes. In other places the Upanishads have compared it to the charioteer and the mad horses unrestrained. Such is the career of men pursuing the vanities of life, children dreaming golden dreams to find that they were but vain, and old men chewing the cud of their past deeds, and yet not knowing how to get out of this network. Thus we are; yet in the life of every one there come golden moments, in the midst of deepest sorrows, nay, of deepest joy there come moments when, as it were, a part of the cloud that hides the sunlight moves away and we catch a glimpse in spite of ourselves of something beyond, away, away beyond the life of the senses, away, away beyond its vanities, its joys and its sorrows, away, away beyond Nature, in our imaginations of happiness here or hereafter, away beyond all thirst for gold or for fame or for name or for prosperity. Man stops for a moment in this glimpse, he sees the other bird calm and majestic, eating neither sweet not bitter fruits, immersed in his own glory, self-

content, self-satisfied, as the Gita says, "Those that have become satisfied in the Atman, those who do not want anything beyond Atman, what work is there for them? Why should they drudge?" He catches a glimpse, then again he forgets, he goes on eating the sweet and bitter fruits of life, he forgets everything again; perhaps after a time, he catches another glimpse, perhaps the lower bird comes nearer and nearer, as blows are received; if he be fortunate to receive hard knocks, then he comes nearer and nearer to the other bird, his companion, his life, his friend, and as he goes nearer he finds that the light from the other bird is playing round his own plumage and as it comes nearer and nearer, lo! the transformation is going on. He finds himself melting away, nearer and nearer still he has gone, he has entirely disappeared. He did not exist; it was but the reflection of the other bird, who was there calm and majestic on those moving leaves, it was he always, always so calm. It was his glory of that upper bird's. No more fear; perfectly satisfied, calmly serene, he remains. In this figure the Upanishad takes you from Dualistic to the utmost Adwaitic conception. Examples can be added to examples, we have no time in this lecture to do that, to show the marvellous poetry of the Upanishads, the painting of the sublime, the grand conceptions; but one other idea, the language and the thought and everything come direct, they fall upon you like a sword blade, like a hammer blow they come. No mistaking their meanings. Every tone of that music is firm and produces its full effect; no gyrations, no mad words, no intricacies in which the brain is lost. Signs of degradation are not there; no attempts at too much allegorising, too much piling of adjectives, making it more and more intricate till the whole of the sense is lost, and

the brain becomes giddy, and man does not know his way out from the maze of that literature, none of them yet. If it be human literature, it must be the production of a race, which has not yet lost a bit of its national vigour. Strength, strength, is what it talks to me from every page. This is the one great thing to remember; it has been the one great lesson I have been taught in my life; strength, it says strength, oh man be not weak. Aye, are there no human weaknesses, says man; there are, say the Upanishads. But will more weakness heal it, would you try to wash dirt with dirt? Will sin cure sin, weakness cure weakness? Strength, oh man, strength say the Upanishads, stand up and be strong; aye, it is the only literature in the world where you find "nabhayeth" "fearless" used again and again; in no other scripture in the world is this adjective applied either to God or to man. "Nabhayeth," "fearless"; and to my mind rises from the part the vision of the great Emperor of the West, Alexander the Great and I see as it were in a picture the great monarch standing on the banks of the Indus, talking to one of our Sanyasins in the forest, and that old man he was talking to perhaps naked, stark naked, sitting upon a block of stone and the Emperor astonished at his wisdom tempting him with gold and honor, to come over to Greece. And this man smiles at his gold and smiles at his temptations and refuses and then the Emperor standing on his authority as an Emperor says, "I will kill you, if you do not come," and the man bursts into a laugh, and he says "you never told such a falsehood in your life, as you tell just now. Who can kill me? Me, you kill Emperor of the material World! Never, for I am spirit unborn and undecaying, never was I born and never do I die, I am the Infinite, the Omnipresent, the Omniscient,

and you kill me, child that you are." Aye, that is strength, that is strength. And the more I read the Upanishads my friends, my countrymen, the more I weep for you, for therein is the great practical application. Strength, strength for us. What we need is strength, who will give us strength? There are thousands to weaken us, stories we have learnt enough, every one of our Puranas if you press them gives out stories enough to fill three-fourths of the libraries of the world. We have all that. Everything that can weaken us as a race we have had for the last thousand years. It seems as if for the last thousand years national life had this one end in view, *viz.*, how to make us weaker and weaker till we have become real earthworms, crawling at the feet of every one who dares to put his foot on us. Therefore, my friends, as one of your blood, as one that lives and dies with you, let me tell you that we want strength, strength and every time strength. And the Upanishads are the great mine of strength. Therein lies strength enough to invigorate the whole world; the whole world can be vivified, made strong, energised. It will call with trumpet voice upon the weak, the miserable, and the down-trodden of all races, creeds and all sects to stand on their feet and be free; freedom, physical freedom, mental freedom, and spiritual freedom are the watchword of the Upanishads. Aye, this is the one Scripture in the world of all others that does not talk of salvation but of freedom. Be free from the bonds of nature, be free from weakness! And it shows to you that you have it already there. That is another peculiarity, you are a Dwaitist, never mind, you have got to admit that by its very nature soul is perfect; only by certain actions of the soul it has become contracted. Indeed, the theory of contraction and expansion of Ramanuja is exactly what the modern evolutionists call Evolution

and Atavism. The soul goes back, becomes contracted as it were; its powers become potential and by good deeds and good thoughts it expands again, reveals its natural perfection. With the Adwaitist the one difference is that he admits evolution in nature and not in the soul. Suppose there is a screen and there is a small hole in the screen. I am a man standing behind the screen and looking at this grand assembly; I can only see very few faces here. Suppose the hole to increase; as it increases more and more all this assembly is revealed to me, till the hole becomes identified with the screen. There is nothing between you and me in this case; neither you changed nor I changed; all the change was in the screen. You were the same from first to last; only the screen changed. This is the Adwaitist's position with regard to Evolution—evolution of nature and manifestation of the Self within. Not that the Self can by any means be made to contract. It is unchangeable, the infinite one. It was covered as it were with a veil, the veil of Maya and this Maya veil becomes thinner and thinner more and more, and the inborn natural glory of the soul comes out and becomes manifest. This is the one great doctrine which the world is waiting to learn from India. Whatever people may talk, however they may try to boast, they will find out day after day that no more can there be a society without recognising this. Do you not see how everything is being revolutionised? Do you not know how it was the custom to take for granted that everything is wicked until it proves itself good? In education, in punishing criminals, in treating lunatics, in the treatment of common diseases even, that was the old law. What is the modern law? The modern law says the body itself is healthy; it cures disease of its own nature. Medicine can at best only help the storing

up of the best in the body. What says it of criminals? It takes for granted that however low a criminal may be, there is still the divinity within which dies not, we must treat criminals as such. All these things have become changed. People now call jails penitentiaries. So with everything; consciously or unconsciously that divinity which is inside and outside is India expressing itself. And in your books is the explanation; men have got to take it. The treatment of man to man will become entirely revolutionised and these old, old ideas of pointing to the weakness of mankind will have to go. They will have received their deathblow within this century. Now people may stand up and criticise us. I have been criticised from one end of the world to the other as one who preaches the diabolical idea that there is no sin! Very good. The decendants of these very men will bless me as the preacher of virtue and not of sin. I am the preacher of virtue, not of sin. I glory in being the preacher of light and not of darkness.

The second great idea which the world is waiting to receive from our Upanishads is the solidarity of this universe. These old, old lines of demarcation and differentiation are vanishing rapidly. Electricity and steam power are placing different parts of the world in intercommunication with each other and as a result, we Hindus no more say that every country beyond our own land is peopled with demons and hobgoblins; nor do the people of Christian countries say that India is only peopled by cannibals and savages. We go out of our country, we find the same brother man with the same strong hand to help, with the same lips to say god-speed and sometimes better than in the country we are born. They, when they come here find the same brotherhood, the same cheers, the same god-speed. Well, our Upanishads say that the cause of all misery is

ignorance; and that is perfectly true applied to every state of life either social or spiritual. It is ignorance that makes us hate each other, it is by ignorance of each other that we do not know and do not love each other. As soon as we come to know each other, love comes; must come, for, are we not one? Thus we find the idea of solidarity coming in in spite of ourselves. Even in Politics and Sociology, problems that were only national 20 years before can no more be solved on national grounds. They are assuming huge proportions, gigantic shapes. They can only be solved when looked at in the broader light of international grounds. International organizations, international combinations, international laws are the cry of the day. That shows the solidarity. In Science every day they are finding out that view of the matter. You speak of matter, the whole universe as one mass, one ocean of matter in which you and I, the sun and the moon and everything else are but the names of different little whirlpools and nothing more. Mentally speaking, it is one universal ocean of thought in which you and I are similar little whirlpools and as spirit it moveth not, it changeth not. It is the One Unchangeable, Unbroken, Homogeneous Atman. The cry for morality is coming also, and that is in our books. The explanation of morality, the fountain of ethics, that also the world wants; and this they will get.

What do *we* want in India? If foreigners want these things, we want them twenty times more. Because in spite of the greatness of the Upanishads, in spite of our boasted ancestry of sages, compared to many other races I must tell you in plain words we are weak, very weak. First of all is our physical weakness. That physical weakness is the cause at least of one-third of our miseries. We are lazy;

we cannot work; we cannot combine; we do not love each other; we are immensely selfish; we are what the women of Europe are; not three of us can come together without hating each other, without being jealous of each other. That is the state in which we are, hopelessly disorganized mobs, immensely selfish; fighting each other for centuries, whether a certain mark is to be put this way or a certain that way; writing volumes and volumes upon such most momentous questions whether the look of a man spoils my food or not! These we have been doing for the last few centuries. We cannot expect anything more except what we are just now, of a race whose whole brain energy has been occupied in such wonderfully beautiful problems and researches! And we are not ashamed. Aye, sometimes we are; but we cannot do what we think. Think we, many things and never do; till parrot-like, thinking has become a habit and never doing. What is the cause of that? Physical weakness. This weak brain is not able to do anything; you must change that. Our young men must be strong first of all. Religion will come afterwards. Be strong my young friends, that is my advice to you. You will be nearer to Heaven through foot-ball than through the study of the Gita. Bold words are these. I have to say them. I love you. I know where the shoe pinches. I have got a little experience. You will understand the Gita better with your biceps muscles a little stronger. You will understand the mighty genius and the mighty strength of Krishna better with a little of strong blood in you. You will understand the Upanishads better and the glory of the Atman when your body stands firm upon your feet and you feel yourselves as men. Thus we have to apply these to our needs. People get disgusted many times at my preaching Adwaitism.

I do not mean to preach Adwaitism or Dwaitism or any *ism* in the world. The only *ism* that we require now is this wonderful idea of the soul—its eternal might, its eternal strength, its eternal purity and its eternal perfection.

If I had a child I would from its very birth begin to tell it "Thou art the Pure one." You have read in one of the Puranas that beautiful story of Queen Madalsa, how as soon as she has a child she puts her child with her own hands on the hammock, and how as the hammock swings to and fro, she begins to sing "Thou art the Pure one, the Stainless, Sinless, the Mighty one, the Great one." Aye, there is much in that. Feel that you are great and you become great. What did I get as my experience all over the world is the question. They may talk about sinners; and if all Englishmen believed that they were sinners indeed, Englishmen would be no better that the Negroes in Central Africa. God bless them that they do not believe it. On the other hand, the Englishman believes he is born the lord of the world. He believes he is great and can do anything in the world. If he wants he can go to the sun or the moon and that makes him great. If he had believed his priests that he is a poor little sinner going to be barbecued through all eternity, he would not be the same Englishman that he is to-day. So I find in every nation that in spite of priests and superstition the divine within lives and asserts itself. We have lost faith. Would you believe me, we have less faith than the Englishmen and women, thousand times less faith! These are plain words, but I say them, cannot help it. Don't you see how Englishmen and women, when they catch our ideas become mad as it were, and although they are the ruling class, come to India to preach our own religion against the jeers and ridicule of

their own countrymen? How many of you can do that; just think of that: and why cannot you do that? Is it that you do not know it? Yo know more than they, that is why it is; you are more wise than is good for you, that is your difficulty! It is all because your blood is only a pint of tar, your brain is sloughing, your body is weak! Change the body, it must be changed. Physical weakness is the cause and nothing else. You talk of reforms, of ideals and all these for the last 100 years and when it comes to practice, you are not to be found anywhere; so that you have disgusted the whole world and the very name of Reform is a thing of ridicule to the whole world! What is the cause? Is it that you do not know? You know too much. The only cause is you are weak, weak, weak, your body is weak, your mind is weak! You have no faith in yourselves! Centuries and centuries, thousand years of crushing tyranny of castes and kings and foreigners and your own people, have taken out all strength from you, my brethren! Like the trodden down and broken, backboneless worms you are!

Who will give us strength? Let me tell you, strength, strength, is what we want. And the first step in getting strength is to uphold the Upanishads and believe that "I am the soul" [Here the Swami repeated a Sanskrit quotation, which he translatad thus] "Me the sword cannot cut; Me no instruments pierce; Me the fire cannot burn; Me the air cannot dry; I am the Omnipotent, I am the Omniscient." So repeat these blessed saving words. Do not say we are weak, we can do anything and everything. What can we not do, every thing can be done by us; we have the same glorious soul in every one and let us believe in it. Have faith as Nachiketa; at the time of his father's sacrifice, faith come unto Nachiketa; aye, I

wish that faith would come unto each of you; and every one of you wound stand up a gigantic intellect, a world-mover, a giant, an infinite god in every respect; that is what I want you to become. This is the strength that you get from the Upanishads, this is the faith that you will get and this is there. Aye, But it was only for the Sanyasin! Rahasya! The Upanishads were in the hands of the Sanyasin; he went into the forest; Sankara was a little kind and says even Grahasthas might study the Upanishads, it will do them good; it will not hurt them. But still the idea is that the Upanishads talked only of the forest. As I told you the other day, the only commentary, the authoritative commentary of the Vedas has been made once and for ever by Him, who inspired the Vedas, by Krishna in the Gita. There it is for every one, for every occupation of life. These conceptions of the Vedanta must come, must remain not only in the forest; they must not only go into the cave, but they must come to work out in the Bar and the Bench, in the Pulpit, the cottage of the poor man, with the fishermen that are catching fish and students that are studying.

They call to every man, every woman, and child, whatever be his or her occupation, everywhere they must be; and what fear? The ideals of the Upanishads! how can the fishermen and all these carry them out? The way has been shown. It is infinite; religion is infinite, none can go beyond it; and whatever you do, that is very good for you. Even the least done brings marvellous results; therefore, let every one do what little he can. If the fisherman thinks that he is the spirit, he will be a better fisherman; if he student thinks he is the spirit, he will be a great student. If the lawyer thinks that he is the spirit, he will be a better lawyer, and so on, and the result

will be, that the castes will remain for ever. It is in the nature of society to form itself into groups; and what will go? These privileges? Caste is a natural something. I can perform one duty in social life, you another; you can govern a country and I can mend a pair of old shoes, but that is no reason why you are greater than I, for can you mend my shoes? Nor can I govern the country? The division of work is natural. I am clever in mending shoes, you are clever in reading Vedas, but that is no reason why you should trample on my head; why if you commit murder you will only be praised, and if I steal an apple I shall be hanged! This will go. Caste is good. That is the only natural way of solving life. Men must form themselves into groups, you cannot get rid of that. Wherever you go there will be caste. But that does not mean that there will be these privileges. They will be knocked on the head. If you teach Vedanta to the fisherman he will say, "I am as good a man as you, I am a fisherman, you are a philosopher; never mind, I have the same God in me, as you have in you." And that is what we want, no privilege for any one, equal chances for every one; let every one be taught the Divine within, and every one will work out his own salvation. Liberty is the first condition of growth.

It is wrong, a thousand times wrong, if any of you dares to say "I will work out the salvation of this woman or child." I am asked again and again what do you think of this Widow question and what do you think of this Women question? Let me answer once for all. Am I a widow that you ask me that nonsense? Am I a woman, that you ask me that question again and again? Who are you to solve Women's poblems and Widows' problems? Are you the Lord God himself, ruling over

every woman and every widow? Hands off. They will solve their own problems. Nonsense! Tyrants, attempting to think that you can do anything for any one; Hands off. The Divine will look after all. Who are you to assume that you know everything; how dare you think, oh, blasphemers, that you have the right over God. For don't you know that every soul is the soul of God, oh blasphemers! Mind your own Karma, a lord of Karma is there, is working. Oh ye blasphemers! Your nation might put you upon a pedestal, your society may cheer you up to the skies, fools may praise you; but He sleeps not. He will catch you; and the punishment will be sure here or hereafter. Therefore, look upon every man and woman and every one as God. You cannot help anyone; you can only serve; serve the children of the Lord, serve the Lord Himself if you have the privilege. If the Lord grants that, you can help any one of His children, blessed you are; don't think too much of yourselves. Blessed you are that that privilege was given to you and others had it not. Hands off therefore; none here requires your help. True help is only worship. I think there are some poor, because of my salvation, I will go and worship them: God is there; some here are miserable for your and my salvation so that we may serve the Lord, coming in the shape of the diseased, coming in the shape of the criminal, coming in the shape of the lunatic, the leper and the sinner.

Bold are my words and let me tell them for it is the greatest privilege in your or my life, that we are allowed to serve the Lord in all these shapes. Give up the idea that by ruling some one, you can do any good to them. But you can do just as in the case of the plant; you can

supply the growing seed with the materials for the making up of its body, bringing to it, the earth, the water, the air that it wants. It will take all that it wants by its own nature, assimilate and grow by it own nature. Bring all light into the world; light, bring light; let light come unto every one, let the task be not finished till every one has reached the Lord. Bring light to the poor, and bring light to the rich, for they require it more than the poor; bring light to the ignorant and more light to the educated; for the vanities of this two-pence half-penny education of our time are tremendous! Thus bring light to all and leave the rest unto the Lord, for in the words of the same Lord "to work you have the right and not to the fruits thereof." Let not your work produce results for *you* and at the same time, may you never be without work. May He who taught such grand ideas to us, to our forefathers ages before, help us to get strength to carry into practice His commands.

——:o:——

THE MISSION OF THE VEDANTA.*

——:o:——

"A very small amount of religious work performed brings a very large amount of result"—are the eternal words of the author of the *Gita*, and if that statement wanted an illustration, in my humble life I am finding everyday the truth of that great saying. My work, gentlemen of Kumbakonam, has been very insignificant indeed, but the kindness and the cordiality of welcome that have met me at every step of my journey from Colombo to this city, are simply beyond all expectation. Yet, at the same time, it is worthy of our traditions as Hindus, it is worthy of our race; for here we are the Hindu race, whose vitality, whose life-principle, whose very soul, as it were, is in religion. I have seen a little of the world, travelling among the races of the West and the East; and everywhere I find among nations one great ideal, which forms the backbone, so to speak, of that race. With some it is politics, with others it is social culture; others again have intellectual culture and so on for their national back-ground. But this our motherland, has religion and religion alone for its basis for its backbone, for the bedrock upon which the whole building of its life has been based. Some of you may remember that in my reply to the kind address which the people of Madras sent over to me in America, I pointed

---

* In reply to the addresses of welcome presented to Swami Vivekananda at Kumbakonam, he delivered the following speech, which we publish here as it bears upon the mission of the *Vedanta* in the world.

out the fact that a peasant in India has, in many respects, a better religious education than many a gentleman in the West, and to-day, beyond all doubt, I myself am verifying my own words. There was a time when I would feel rather discontented at the want of information among the masses of India, and the lack of thirst among them for information, but now I understand it. Where their interest lies they are more eager for information than the masses of any other race that I have seen or have travelled among. Ask our peasants about the momentous political changes in Europe, the upheavals that are going on in European society. They do not know anything of these, nor do they care to know; but those very peasants, even in Ceylon, detached from India in many ways, cut off from a living interest in India—I found the very peasants working in the fields there had already known that there was a Parliament of Religions in America, and that one of their men had gone over there, and that he had had some success. Where, therefore, their interest is, there they are as eager for information as any other race; and religion is the one and the sole interest of the people in India. I am not just now discussing whether it is good to have the vitality of the race in religious ideals or in political ideals, but so far it is clear to us, that for good or for evil our vitality is concentrated in our religion. You cannot change it. You cannot destroy one thing and put in its place another. You cannot transplant a large growing tree from one soil to another and make it immediately take root here. For good or for evil the religious ideal has been flowing into India for thousands of years, for good or evil the Indian atmosphere has been filled with ideals of religion for shining scores of centuries, for good or evil we have been born and brought up in the very

midst of these ideals of religion, till it has entered into our very blood, and tingles with every drop of it in our veins, and has become one with our constitution, become the very vitality of our lives. Can you give such a religion up without the rousing of the same energy in reaction, without filling the channel which that mighty river has cut out for itself in the course of thousands of years? Do you want that the Ganges should go back to its icy bed and begin a new course? Even if that were possible, it would be impossible for this country to give up her characteristic course of religious life and take up a new career of politics or something else for herself. You can only work under the law of least resistance, and this religious line is the line of least resistance in India. This is the line of life, this is the line of growth and this is the line of well-being in India—to follow the track of religion. Aye, in other countries religion is only one of the many necessities in life. To use a common illustration which I am in the habit of using, my lady has many things in her parlour, and it is the fashion now-a-days to have a Japanese vase, and she must procure it: it does not look well without it. So my lady, or my gentleman, has many other occupations in life: a little bit of religion also must come in to complete it. Consequently she has a little religion. Politics, social improvement, in one word, this world, is the goal of the rest of mankind, and God and religion come in quietly as the helpers out of the world. There God is, so to speak, the being who helps to cleanse and to furnish this world of ours; that is apparently all the value of God for them. Do you not know how for the last hundred or two hundred years, you have been hearing again and again out of the lips of men who ought to have known better, from the mouths of those who

pretend, at least, to know better, that all the arguments they produce against the Indian religion of ours is this, that our religion does not conduce to well-being in this world, that it does not bring to us handfuls of gold, that it does not make us robbers of nations, that it does not make the strong stand upon the bodies of the weak, and feed themselves with the life's blood of the weak. Certainly our religion does not do that. It cannot march cohorts, under whose feet the earth trembles, for the purpose of destruction and pillage and the ruination of races. Therefore, they say—what is there in this religion ? It does not bring any grist to the grinding mill, any strength to the muscles ; what is there in such a religion ? They little dream that that is the very argument with which we prove our religion to be good and true. Ours is the true religion because it does not make for the world. Ours is the only true religion because this little sense-world of three days' duration is not to be, according to it, the end and aim of all, is not to be our great goal. This little earthly horizon of a few feet is not that which bounds the view of our religion. Ours is away beyond, and still beyond ; beyond the senses, beyond space, and beyond time, away, away beyond, till nothing of this world is left there and the universe itself becomes like one drop in the transcendent ocean of the glory of the soul. Ours is the true religion because it teaches that God alone is true, and that this world is false and fleeting, and that all your gold is dust, and that all your power is finite, and that life itself is oftentimes an evil ; therefore it is that ours is the true religion. Ours is the true religion, because, above all, it teaches renunciation, and stands up with the wisdom of ages to tell and to declare to the nations who are mere children of yesterday in comparison with the

hoary antiquity of the wisdom that our ancestors have discovered for us here in India—to tell them in plain words, "Children, you are slaves of the sense: there is only finiteness in the senses; there is only ruination in the senses; the three short days of luxury here bring only ruin at last. Give it all up, renounce the love of the senses and of the world; that is the way of religion." through renunciation is the way to the goal and not through enjoyment. Therefore, ours is the only true religion. Aye, it is a curious fact that, while nations after nations have come upon the stage of the world, played their parts vigorously for a few moments, and died almost without leaving a mark or a ripple on the ocean of time, here we are, living, as it were, an eternal life. They talk a great deal of the new theories about the survival of the fittest, and they think that it is the strength of the muscles which is the fittest to survive. If that were true, any one of the aggressively known old-world nations would have lived in glory to-day, and we, the weak Hindus—an English lady once told me, what have the Hindus done; they never even conquered one single race;—even this race, which never conquered even one other race or nation, lives here three hundred million strong. And it is not at all true that all its energies are spent, that atavism has seized upon every bit of its body; that is not true. There is vitality enough, and it comes out in torrents and deluges when the time is ripe and requires it. We have, as it were, thrown a challenge to the whole world from the most ancient times. In the West, they are trying to solve the problem how much a man can possess, and we are trying here to solve the problem on how little a man can live. This struggle and this difference has to go on still for some centuries. But if history has

any truth in it, and if prognostications ever prove true, it must be that those who train themselves to live on the least supply of things and to control themselves well, will in the end gain the battle, and that all those who run after enjoyment and luxury, however vigorous they may seem for the moment, will have to die and become annihilated. There are times in the history of a man's life, nay, in the history of the lives of nations, when a sort of world-weariness becomes painfully predominant. It seems that such a tide of world-weariness has come upon the Western World. There too they have thinkers, great men; and they are already finding out that it is all vanity of vanities, this race after gold and power; many, nay, most cultured men and women there, are already weary of this competition, this struggle, this brutality of their commercial civilisation, and they are looking forward towards something better. There is a class which still clings on to political and social changes as the only panacea for the evils in Europe, but among the great thinkers there other ideals are growing. They have found out that no amount of political or social manipulation of human contitions can cure the evils of life. It is only a change of the soul itself for the better that will cure the evils of life. No amount of force, or government, or legislative cruelty, will change the conditions of a race, but it is spiritual culture and ethical culture alone that can change wrong racial tendencies for the better. Thus these races of the West are eager for some new thought, for some new philosophy; the religion they have had, Christianity, although imperfectly understood and good and glorious in many respects, is, as understood hitherto, found to be insufficient. The thoughtful men of the West find in our ancient philosophy, especially in the *Vedanta*, the new

impulse of thought they are seeking, the very spiritual food and drink they are hungering and thirsting for. And it is no wonder.

I have become used to hear all sorts of wonderful claims put forward in favour of every religion under the sun. You have also heard, quite within recent times, claims put forward in favour of Christianity by a great friend of mine, Dr. Barrows, that Christianity is the only universal religion. Let me consider this question awhile and lay before you my reasons why I think that is the *Vedanta*, and the *Vedanta* alone that can become the universal religion of man, and that none else is fitted for that role. Excepting our own, almost all the other great religions in the world are inevitably connected with the life or lives of one or more founders. All their theories, their teachings, their doctrines, and their ethics are built round the life of a personal founder from whom they get their sanction, their authority, and their power; and strangely enough upon the historicality of the founder's life is built, as it were, all the fabric of such religions. If there is one blow dealt to the historicality of that life as has been the case in modern times with the lives of almost all the so-called founders of religion—we know that half of the details of such lives is not now seriously believed in and that the other half is seriously doubted—if this becomes the case, if that rock of historicality, as they pretend to call it, is shaken and shattered, the whole building tumbles down broken absolutely, never to regain its lost status. Every one of the great religions in the world excepting our own, is built upon such historical characters; but ours rest upon principles. There is no man or woman who can claim to have created the *Vedas*. They are the embodiment of eternal principles; sages discovered them; and now and

then the names of these sages are mentioned, just their names; we do not know who or what they were. In many cases we do not know who their fathers were, and almost in every case we do not know when and where they were born. But what cared they, these sages, for their names? They were the preachers of principles, and they themselves, as far as they went, tried to become illustrations of the principles they preached. At the same time, just as our God is an impersonal and yet a personal God, so is our religion a most intensely impersonal one, a religion based upon principles, and yet it has an infinite scope for the play of persons; for what religion gives you more incarnations, more prophets and seers, and still waits for infinitely more? Says the *Bhagavad-Gita* that incarnations are infinite, leaving ample scope for as many as you like to come. Therefore, if any one or more of these persons in India's religious history, any one or more of these incarnations, and any one or more of our prophets, are proved not to have been historical, it does not injure our religion a bit; even then it remains there firm as ever, because it is based upon principles, and not on persons. It is vain to try to gather all the peoples of the world around a single personality. It is difficult to make them gather together even round eternal and universal principles. If it ever becomes possible to bring the largest portion of humanity to one way of thinking in regard to religion, mark you, it must be always through principles and not through persons. Yet as I have said, our religion has ample scope for the authority and influence of persons. There is that most wonderful theory of *Ishta* which gives you the fullest and the freest choice possible among these great religious personalities. You may take up anyone of the prophets or teachers as your guide and the object of your special adoration; you are even allowed to think that

he whom you have chosen is the greatest of the prophets, the greatest of all the *Avataras*; there is no harm in that, but you must keep on a firm background of eternally true principles. The strange fact is here, that the power of our incarnations has been holding good with us only so far as they are illustrations of the principles in the *Vedas*. The glory of Sri Krishna is that he has been the best preacher of our eternal religion of principles and the best commentator on the *Vedanta* that ever lived in India.

The second claim of the *Vedanta* upon the attention of the world is that, of all the scriptures in the world, it is the one scripture the teaching of which is in entire harmony with the results that have been attained by the modern scientific investigations of external nature. Two minds in the dim past of history, cognate to teach other in form, kinship and sympathy, started, being placed in different circumstances, for the same goal through different routes. The one was the ancient Hindu mind and the other the ancient Greek mind. The latter started in search of that goal beyond by analysing the external world. The former started by analysing the internal world. And even through the various vicissitudes of their history it is easy to make out these two vibrations of thought tending to produce similar echoes from the goal beyond. It seems clear that the conclusions of modern materialistic science can be acceptable, harmoniously with their religion, only to the *Vedantins*, or Hindus as they call them. It seems clear that modern materialism can hold its own and at the same time, approach spirituality by taking up the conclusions of the *Vedanta*.. It seems to us, and to all who care to know, that the conclusions of modern science are the very conclusions the *Vedanta* reached ages ago; only in modern science they are written

in the language of matter. This, then, is another claim of the *Vedanta* upon modern Western minds, its rationality, the wonderful rationalism of the *Vedanta.* I have myself been told by some of the best scientific minds of the day in the West how wonderfully rational the conclusions of the *Vedanta* are. I know one of them personally who scarcely has time to eat his meals or go out of his laboratory, and who yet would stand by the hour to attend my lectures on the *Vedanta;* for, as he expresses it, they are so scientific, they so exactly harmonise with the aspirations of the age and with the conclusions which modern science is coming to at the present time. Two such scientific conclusions drawn from *Comparitive Religion,* I would specially like to draw your attention to; the one bears upon the idea of the universality of religions, and the other on the idea of the oneness of things. We observe in the histories of Babylon and among the Jews an interesting religious phenomenon happening. We find that each of these Babylonian and Jewish people were divided into so many tribes, each tribe having a God of its own, and that these little tribal gods had often a generic name. The Gods among the Babylonians were all called Baals, and among them Baal Merodac was the chief. In course of time one of these many tribes would conquer and assimilate the other racially allied tribes, and the natural result would be that the God of the conquering tribe would be placed at the head of all the gods of the other tribes. Thus the so-called boasted monotheism of the Semites was created. Among the Jews the gods went by the name of Moloch. Of these there was one Moloch who belonged to the tribe called Israel and he was called the Moloch Yahva, or Moloch Yava. Then this tribe of Israel slowly conquered some of the other tribes of the same race, destroyed

their Molochs, and declared its own Moloch to be the Supreme Moloch of all the Molochs. And I am sure most of you know the amount of bloodshed, of tyranny, and of brutal savagery that this religious conquest entailed. Later on the Babylonians tried to destroy this supremacy of Moloch Yahva, but could not succeed. It seems to me that such an attempt at tribal self-assertion in religious matters might have taken place on the frontiers of India also. Here, too, all the various tribes of the Aryans might have come into conflict with one another for declaring the supremacy to their several tribal gods; but India's history was to be otherwise, was to be different from that of the Jews. India was to be alone of all lands the land of toleration and of spirituality, and, therefore, the fight between tribes and their gods did not take place long here, for one of the greatest sages that was ever born anywhere found out here in India even at that distant time, which history cannot reach—tradition itself dares not to peep into the gloom of that past when the sage arose—and declared, "He who exists in one the sages call Him variously"—*Ekam sat vipra bahudha vadanti;* one of the most memorable sentences that were ever uttered, one of the grandest truths that were ever discovered; and for us Hindus this truth has been the very backbone of our national existence. For throughout the vistas of the centuries of our national life this one idea, *Ekam sat vipra bahudha vadanti*, comes down, gaining strength and vigor as it rolls along, gaining in volume and in fullness till it has permeated the whole of our national existence, till it is mingled in our blood, and has become one with us in every grain. We love that grand truth in every grain, and our country has become the glorious land of religious toleration. It is here and here alone that people built temples and

churches for the religious which have come in with the object of condemning our own religion. This is one very great principle that the world is waiting to learn from us. Aye, you little know how much of intolerance is yet abroad. It struck me more than once that I would have to leave my bones on foreign shores owing to the prevalence of religious intolerance. Killing a man is nothing for religion's sake; to-morrow they may do it in the very heart of the boasted civilisation of the West, if to-day they are not really doing so. Outcasting in its most horrible forms would often come down upon the head of a man in the West, if he dared to say a word against his country's accepted religion. They talk glibly and smoothly here in criticism of our caste laws. If you go to the West and live there as I have done, you will know that even the biggest professors you hear of are arrant cowards and dare not tell, for fear of public opinion, a hundredth part of what they hold to be really true in religious matters.

Therefore, the world is waiting for this grand idea of universal toleration. It will be a great acquisition to civilisation. Nay, no civilisation can exist long unless this idea enters it. No civilisation can go on growing before fanaticism stops and bloodshed stops and brutality stops. No civilisation can begin to lift up its head until we look charitably upon each other, and the first step towards that much needed charity is to look charitably and kindly upon the religious convictions of each other. Nay, more, to understand that not only should we be charitable towards each other, but positively helpful to each other, however different our religious ideas and convictions may be. And that is exactly what we in India do, as I have just related to you. It is here in India that Hindus have built and are still building churches for Christians, and mosques for

Mohammedans. That is the thing to do. In spite of their hatred, in spite of their brutality, in spite of their cruelty, in spite of their tyranny, and in spite of the filthy language they are always given to uttering, we will and must go on building churches for the Christians and mosques for the Mohammedans till we conquer through love, till we have demonstrated to the world that love alone is the fittest thing to survive and not hatred, that it is gentleness that has the strength to live on and to fructify, but not mere brutality and physical force.

The other great idea that the world wants from us to-day, the thinking part of Europe and the whole world—more, perhaps, the lower classes than the higher, more the masses than the cultured, more the ignorant than the educated, more the weak than the strong—is that eternal grand idea of the spiritual oneness of the whole universe. I need not tell you to-day, men from this Madras University, how the modern researches of Europe have demonstrated through physical means the oneness and the solidarity of the whole universe, how physically speaking, you and I, the sun and the moon and the stars, are all but little waves or wavelets in the midst of an infinite ocean of matter, and how Indian psychology had demonstrated ages ago that, similarly, both body and mind are but mere names or little wavelets in the ocean of matter, the *Samashti*, and how, going one step further, it is shown in the *Vedanta* that, behind that idea of the unity of the whole show, the real soul is also one. There is but one soul throughout the universe, all is but one existence. This great idea of the real and basic solidarity of the whole universe has frightened many, even in this country; it even now finds sometimes more opponents than adherents; I tell you, nevertheless, that it is the one great life-giving

idea which the world wants from us to-day and which the mute masses of India want for their uplifting, for none can regenerate this land of ours without the practical application and effective operation of this ideal of the oneness of things. The rational West is earnestly bent upon seeking out the rationality, the *raison d'etre* of all its philosophy and its ethics; and you all know well that ethics cannot be derived from the mere sanction of any personage, however great and divine he may have been, of one who having been born but yesterday has had to die a few minutes after. Such an explanation of the authority of ethics no more appeals to the highest of the world's thinkers: they want something more than human sanction for ethical and moral codes to be binding, they want some eternal principle of truth as the sanction of ethics. And where is that eternal sanction to be found except in the only infinite reality that exists, in you and in me and in all, in the self, in the soul? The infinite oneness of the Soul is the eternal sanction of all morality, that you and I are not only brothers—every literature voicing man's struggle towards freedom says that, children have preached that for you—but that you and I are really one. This is the dictate of Indian philosophy. This oneness is the rationale of all ethics and all spirituality. Europe wants it to-day just as much as our downtrodden masses do, and this great principle is even now unconsciously forming the basis of all the latest political and social aspirations that are coming up in England, in Germany, in France, and in America. And mark it, my friends, that in and through all the literature voicing man's struggle towards freedom, towards universal freedom, again and again you find the Indian *Vedantic* ideals coming out prominently. In some cases the writers do not know the source of their inspira-

tion, in some cases they try to appear very original, and a few there are bold and grateful enough to mention the source and acknowledge their indebtedness to it. My friends, when I was in America, I heard it once complained that I was preaching too much of *Advaita*, and too little of dualism. Aye, I know what grandeur, what oceans of love, what infinite, ecstatic blessings and joy there are in the dualistic love theories of worship and religion. I know it all. But this is not the time with us to weep even in joy; we have had weeping enough; no more is this the time for us to become soft. This softness has been on us till we are dead; we have become like masses of cotton. What our country now wants is muscles of iron and nerves of steel, gigantic wills which nothing can resist, which can penetrate into the mysteries and the secrets of the universe, and will accomplish their purpose even if it meant going down to the bottom of the ocean and meeting death face to face in every fashion. That is what we want, and that can only be created, established and strengthened by understanding and realising the ideal of *Advaita*, that ideal of the oneness of all. Faith, faith, faith in ourselves, faith, faith in God, this is the secret of greatness. If you have faith in all the 330 millions of your mythological gods and in all the gods which foreigners have now and again sent into your midst, and still have no faith in yourselves, there is no salvation for you. Have faith in yourselves, and stand up on that faith and be strong; that is what we need. Why is it that we 300 millions of people have been ruled for the last one thousand years by any and every handful of foreigners who chose to walk over our prostrate bodies? Because they had faith in themselves and we had not. What did I learn in the West, and what did I see

behind those talks of frothy nonsense of the Christian religious sects saying that man was a fallen and hopelessly fallen sinner? There inside the national hearts of both Europe and America resides the tremendous power of the men's faith in themselves. An English boy will tell you—"I am an Englishman, and I will do anything." The American boy will tell you the same, and so will every European boy. Can our boys say the same thing here? No, not even the boys' fathers. We have lost faith in ourselves. Therefore, to preach the *Advaita* aspect of the *Vedanta* is necessary to rouse up the hearts of men, to show them the glory of their souls. It is, therefore, that I preach this *Advaita*, and I do so not on sectarian but upon universal and widely acceptable grounds.

It is easy to find out the way of reconciliation that will not hurt the dualist or the qualified monist. There is not one system in India which does not hold the doctrine that God is within, that divinity resides within all things. Every one of our *Vedantic* systems admits that all purity, and perfection and strength are in the soul already. According to some this perfection sometimes becomes, as it were, contracted, and at other times it becomes expanded again. Yet it is there. According to the *Advaita* it neither contracts nor expands, but becomes hidden and uncovered now and again. Pretty much the same thing in effect. The one may be a more logical statement than the other, but as to the result, the practical conclusions, both are about the same; and this is the one central idea which the world stands in need of, and nowhere is the want more felt than in this, our own motherland. Aye, my friends, I must tell you a few harsh words. I read in the newspapers, when one of our poor fellows is murdered or illtreated by an Englishman, how the howls go all over the

country; I read and I weep, and the next moment comes to my mind the question who is responsible for it all. As a *Vedantist* I cannot but put that question to myself. The Hindu is a man of introspection, he wants to see things in and through himself, through the subjective vision. I, therefore, ask myself who is responsible, and the answer comes every time, not the English, no, they are not responsible, it is we who are responsible for all our misery and all our degradation, and we alone are responsible. Our aristocratic ancestors went on treading the common masses of our country under foot, till they became helpless, till under this torment the poor, poor people nearly forgot that they were human beings. They have been compelled to be merely hewers of wood and drawers of water for centuries, so much so that they are made to believe that they are born as slaves, born as hewers of wood and drawers of water. And if anybody says a kind word for them, with all our boasted education of modern times, I often find our men shrink at once from the duty of lifting up the downtrodden. Not only so, but I also find that all sorts of most demoniacal and brutal arguments, culled from the crude ideas of hereditary transmission and other such gibberish from the Western world, are brought forward in order to brutalise and tyrannise over the poor all the more. In the Parliament of Religions in America there came among others a young man, a Negro born, a real African Negro, and he made a beautiful speech. I became interested in the young man, and now and then talked to him, but could learn nothing about him. But one day in England I met some Americans, and this is what they told me—that this boy was the son of a Negro chief in the heart of Africa, and that one day another chief became angry with the father of this boy and murdered

him and murdered the mother also to be cooked and eaten, and that he ordered the child also to be cooked and eaten; but that the boy fled and after passing through great hardships, travelling through a distance of several hundreds of miles, he reached the seashore, and that there he was taken into an American vessel and brought over to America. And this boy made that speech! After that, what was I to think of your doctrine of heredity! Aye, Brahmins, if the Brahmin has more aptitude for learning on the ground of heredity than the Pariah, spend no more money on the Brahmin's education but spend all on the Pariah. Give to the weak, for there all the gift is needed. If the Brahmin is born clever, he can educate himself without help. If the others are not born clever, let them have all the teaching and the teachers they want. This is justice and reason as I understand. These our poor people, therefore, require to hear and to know what they really are, these down-trodden masses of India. Yea, let every man and woman and child, without respect of caste or birth or weakness or strength, hear and know that behind the strong and the weak, behind the high and the low, behind every one, there is that Infinite Soul assuring the infinite possibility and the infinite capacity of all to become great and good. Let us proclaim to every soul—*Uttishtata Jagrata, prapya varan nibodhata*—"Arise, awake and stop not till the goal is reached." Arise, awake; awake from this hypnotism of weakness. *None is really weak;* the soul is infinite, omnipotent, and omniscient. Stand up, assert yourself, proclaim the God within you, do not deny. Too much of inactivity, too much of weakness, too much of hypnotism, has been and is, upon our race. O ye modern Hindus, dehypnotise yourselves. The way to do that is found in your own sacred books. Teach yourselves, teach every one his real

nature, call upon the sleeping soul to see how it rises. Power will come, glory will come, goodness will come, purity will come, and everything that is excellent will come, when this sleeping soul is roused to self-conscious activity. Aye, if there is anything in the *Gita* that I like, it is these two verses, coming out strong as the very gist, the very essence, of Krishna's teaching—"He who sees the Supreme Lord dwelling alike in all beings, the Imperishable in things that perish, sees indeed. For seeing the Lord as the same, everywhere present, he does not destroy the self by the self, and then he goes to the highest goal.

Thus there is a great opening for the *Vedanta* to do beneficent work both here and elsewhere. This wonderful idea of the sameness and omnipresence of the Supreme Soul has to be preached for the amelioration and elevation of the human race, here as elsewhere. Wherever there is evil and wherever there is ignorance and want of knowledge, I have found out in my experience that, as our scriptures say, all evil comes by relying upon differences, and that all good comes from faith in equality, in the underlying sameness and real oneness of things. This is the great *Vedantic* ideal. To have the ideal is one thing, and to apply it practically to the details of daily life is quite another thing in every case. It is very good to point out an ideal, but where is the practical way to reach it? Here, naturally, comes the difficult question which has been uppermost for centuries in the minds of our people, the vexed question of caste and of social reformation. I must frankly let this audience know that I am neither a caste-breaker nor a mere social reformer. I have nothing to do directly with your castes or with your social reformation. Live in any caste you like, but that is no

reason why you should hate another caste or another man. It is love and love alone that I preach, and I base my teaching on the great *Vedantic* truth of the sameness and omnipresence of the soul of the Universe. For the last one hundred years nearly, our country has been flooded with social reformers and various social reform proposals. Personally I have no fault to find with these reformers. Most of them are good well-meaning men, and their aims too are very laudable on certain points; but it is quite a patent fact that this one hundred years of social reform has produced no permanent and valuable result appreciable throughout the country. Platform speeches have been sent out by the thousand, denunciations have been hurled upon the devoted head of the Hindu race and its civilisation in volumes after volumes, and yet no good practical result has been achieved; and where is the reason for that? The reason is not hard to find. It is in the denunciation itself. In the first place, as I told you before, we must try to keep our historically acquired character as a people; I grant that we have to take a great many things from other nations, that we have to learn many lessons from outside; but I am sorry to say that most of our modern reform movements have been inconsiderate imitations of Western means and methods of work, and that surely will not do for India; therefore it is that all our recent reform movements have had no result. In the second place, denunciation is not at all the way to do good. That there are evils in our society even the child can see, and what society is there where there are no evils? And let me take this opportunity, my countrymen, of telling you that in comparing the different races and nations of the world I have been among, I have come to the conclusion that our people are on the whole the most

moral and the most highly godly, and our institutions are, in their plan and purpose, best suited to make mankind happy. I do not, therefore, want any reformation. My ideal is growth, expansion, development on national lines. As I look back upon the history of my country, I do not find in the whole world another country which has done quite so much for the improvement of the human mind. Therefore, I have no words of condemnation for my nation. I tell them " You have done well; only try to do better." Great things have been done in the past in this land; there is both time and room for greater things to be done. I am sure you know that we cannot stop. If we stop we die. We have either to go forward or to go backward. We have either to progress or to degenerate. Our ancestors did great things in the past, but we have to grow into fuller life and march on even beyond their great achievements. How can we now go back and degenerate ourselves? That cannot be: that must not be; going back will lead us all to decay and death. Therefore, let us go forward and do yet greater things; that is what I have to tell you. I am no preacher of any momentary social reform. I am not trying to remedy evils, I only ask you to go forward and to complete the practical realisation of the scheme of human progress that has been laid out in the most perfect order by our ancestors. I only ask you to work, to realise more and more the *Vedantic* ideal of the solidarity of man and his inborn divine nature. Had I the time I would gladly show you how every bit of what we have now to do was laid out years ago by our ancient law-givers, and how they actually anticipated all the different changes that have taken place and are still to take place in our national institutions. They also were breakers of caste, but they were not like our modern men. They did not

mean by the breaking of caste that all people in a city should sit down together to a dinner of beefsteak and champagne, nor that all fools and lunatics in the country should marry when, where, and whom they chose, and reduce the country to a lunatic asylum, nor did they believe that the prosperity of a nation is to be guaged by the number of husbands its widows get. I am yet to see such a prosperous nation. The ideal man of our ancestors was the Brahmin. In all our books stands out prominently this ideal of the Brahmin. In Europe there is My Lord the Cardinal who is struggling hard and spending thousands of pounds to prove the nobility of his ancestors, and he will not be satisfied until he has traced his ancestry to to some dreadful tyrant, who lived on a hill, and watched the people passing through the streets, and whenever he had the opportunity sprang out on them and robbed them. That was the business of these nobility-bestowing ancestors, and my Lord Cardinal is not satisfied until he can trace his ancestry to one of these. In India, on the other hand, the greatest princes seek to trace their descent to some ancient sage, dressed in a bit of loincloth, living in a forest eating roots, and studying the *Vedas*. It is there that the Indian prince goes to trace his ancestry. Ye are high caste when you can trace your ancestry to a Rishi, and not before that. Our ideal of high birth, therefore, is different from that of others. Our ideal is the Brahmin of spiritual culture and renunciation. By the Brahmin ideal what do I mean? The ideal Brahminness in which worldliness is altogether absent and true wisdom is abundantly present. That is the ideal of the Hindu race. Have you not heard how it is declared that he, the Brahmin, is not amenable to law, that he has no law, that he is not governed by kings, and that his body cannot be hurt?

That is perfectly true. Do not understand it in the light which has been thrown upon it by interested and ignorant fools, but understand it in the light of the true and original *Vedantic* conception. If the Brahmin is he who has killed all selfishness and who lives and works to acquire and to propagate wisdom and the power of love, a country that is inhabited by such Brahmins altogether, by men and women who are spiritual and moral and good, is it strange to think of that country as being above and beyond all law? What police, what military are necessary to govern them? Why should any one govern them at all? Why should they live under a Government? They are good and noble, they are *the* men of God; these are our ideal Brahmins, and we read that in the *Satya-Yuga* there was only one caste to start with, and that was that of the Brahmin. We read in the *Mahabharata* that the whole world was in the beginning peopled with Brahmins, and that as they began to degenerate they became divided into different castes, and that when the cycle turns round they will all go back to that Brahminical origin. This cycle is now turning round, and I draw your attention to this fact. Therefore, our solution of the caste question is not degrading those who are already high up, is not running amuck through food and drink, is not jumping out of our own limits in order to have more enjoyment; but it comes by every one of us fulfilling the dictates of our *Vedantic* religion, by our attaining spirituality, and by our becoming the ideal Brahmin. There is a law laid on each one of you here in this land by your ancestors, whether you are Aryans, or non-Aryans, Rishis, or Brahmins, or the very lowest out-castes. The command is the same to you all, and that command is that you must not stop at all without making progress and that, from the highest man to the lowest *Pariah*

every one in this country has to try and become the ideal Brahmin. This *Vedantic* idea is applicable not only here but over the whole world. Such is our ideal of caste, meant for raising all humanity slowly and gently towards the realisation of that great ideal of the spiritual man who is non-resisting, calm, steady, worshipful, pure, and meditative. In that ideal there is God.

How are these things to be brought about? I must again draw your attention to the fact that cursing and vilifying and abusing do not, and cannot, produce any good. They have been tried for years and years, and no valuable result has been obtained. Good results can be produced only through love, through sympathy. It is a great subject, and it requires several lectures to elucidate all the plans that I have in view, and all the ideas that are, in this connection, coming to my mind day after day. I must therefore conclude, only reminding you of this fact, that this ship of our nation, O Hindus, has been usefully plying here for ages. To-day, perhaps, it has sprung a few leaks; to-day, perhaps, it has become a little worn; and if such is the case, it behoves you and I, children of the soil, to try our best to stop these leaks and holes. Let us tell our countrymen of the danger, let them awake, let them mend it. I will cry at the top of my voice from one part to the other of this country to awaken the people to know their situation and their duty therein. Suppose they do not hear me, still I shall not have one word of abuse for them, not one word of curse. Great has been our nation's work in the past, and if we cannot do greater things in the future, let us have this consolation, let us all die and sink together in peace. Be patriots, love the race which has done such great things for us in the past. Aye, the more I compare notes the more I love you, my fellow countrymen; you

are good and pure and gentle; and you have been always tryannised over; such is the irony of this material world of *Maya*. Never mind that: the spirit will triumph in the long run. In the meanwhile let us work and let us not abuse our country, let us not curse and abuse the weather-beaten and work-worn institutions of our thrice holy motherland. Have not one word of condemnation, even for the most superstitious and the most irrational of its institutions, for they also must have served to do us good in the past. Remember always that there is not in the world one other country whose intstitutions are really better in their aims and objects than the institutions of this land. I have seen castes in almost every country in the world, but nowhere is their plan and purpose so glorious as here. If caste is thus unavoidable, I would rather have a caste of purity and culture and self-sacrifice than a caste of dollar. Therefore, utter no words of condemnation. Close your lips and let your hearts open. Work out the salvation of this land and of the whole world, each of you thinking that the entire burden is on your shoulders. Carry the light and the life of the *Vedanta* to every door and rouse up the divinity that is hidden within every soul. Then, whatever may be the measure of your success, you shall have this satisfaction, that you have lived, worked, and died for a great cause. In the success of this cause, howsoever brought about, is centred the salvation of humanity here and hereafter.

THE SAGES OF INDIA.*

IN speaking of the sages of India, my mind goes back to those periods of which history has no record, and tradition tries in vain to bring the secrets out of the gloom of the past. The sages of India have been almost innumerable, for, what have the Hindu nation been doing for thousands of years except producing sages? I will take, therefore, the lives of a few of the most brilliant ones, the epoch-makers, and present them before you, that it to say, my study of them. In the first place, we have to understand a little about our scriptures. Two ideals of truth are in our scriptures, the one is what we call the eternal, and the other not so authoritative, yet binding under particular circumstances, and time, and place. The eternal relations which deal with the nature of the soul, and of God, and the relations between souls and God, are embodied in what we call the Srutis, the Vedas. The next set of truths is what we call the Smritis, as embodied in the works of Manu, Yagnavalkya, and other writers, and also in the Puranas, down to the Tantras. This second class of books and teachings is subordinate to the Srutis, inasmuch as whenever any one of these contradicts anything in the Srutis, the Srutis must prevail. This is the law. The idea is that the framework of the destiny and goal of man has been all delineated in the Vedas, the details have been left to be worked out in the Smritis and Puranas. As for general directions, the Srutis are enough;

* A lecture delivered in Madras.

for spiritual life, nothing more can be said, nothing more can be known. All that is necessary has been known, all the advice that is necessary to lead the soul to perfection has been completed in the Srutis ; the details alone were left and these the Smritis have supplied from time to time. Another peculiarity is that these Srutis have many sages as the recorders of the truths in them, mostly men, some even women. Very little is known of their personalities, the dates of their birth, and so forth, but their best thoughts, their best discoveries, I should say, are preserved there, embodied in the sacred literature of our country, the Vedas. In the Smritis, on the other hand, personalities re more in evidence. Startling, gigantic, impressive, world-moving persons for the first time, as it were, stand before us, sometimes of more magnitude, even than their teachings.

This is a peculiarity which we have to understand,—that our religion preaches an Impersonal Personal God. It preaches an amount of impersonal laws *plus* any amount of personality, but the very fountain-head of our religion is in the Srutis, the Vedas, which are perfectly impersonal, and the persons all come in the Smritis and Puranas, the great Avatars, incarnations of God, Prophets, and so forth. And this ought also to be observed, that except our religion, every other religion in the world, depends upon the life or lives of some personal founder or founders. Christianity is built upon the life of Jesus Christ, Mohammedanism of Mohammed, Buddhism of Buddha, Jainism of the Jainas, and so on. It naturally follows that there must be in all these religions a good deal of fight about what they call the historical evidences of these great personalities. If at any time the historical evidences about the existence of these personages in ancient times become

weak, the whole building of the religion tumbles down to the ground and is broken to pieces. We escaped this fate because our religion is not based upon a person but on principles. That you obey your religion is not because it came through the authority of a sage, no, not even of an incarnation. Krishna is not the authority of the Vedas, but the Vedas are the authority of Krishna himself. His glory is that he is the greatest preacher of the Vedas that ever existed. So as to other incarnations; so with all our sages. Our first principle is that all that is necessary for the perfection of man and for attaining unto freedom is there in the Vedas. You cannot see anything new. You cannot go beyond a perfect unity, which is the goal of all knowledge; this has been already reached there, and it is impossible to go beyond the unity. Religious knowledge became complete when *Tat twam asi* was discovered, and that was in the Vedas. What remained was the guidance of people from time to time, according to different times and places, according to different circumstances and environments; people had to be guided along the old, old path, and for this these great teachers came, these great sages. Nothing can bear out more clearly this position than the celebrated saying of Sri Krishna in the Gita—"Whenever virtue subsides and irreligion prevails I create myself for the protection of the good; for the destruction of all immorality I am coming from time to time." This is the idea in India.

What follows? That, on the one hand, there are these eternal principles which stand upon their own foundations, without depending on any reasoning even, much less on the authority of sages, however great, of incarnations, however brilliant they may have been. We may remark that as this is the unique position in India our claim is

that the Vedanta only can be the universal religion, that it is already the existing universal religion in the world, because it teaches principles and not persons. No religion built upon a person can be taken up as a type by all the races of mankind. In our own country we find that there have been so many grand personages; in each little city we find that so many hundreds of persons are taken up as types by the different minds in that one city. How can it be possible that one person, as Mahommed or Buddha or Christ, can be taken up as the one type for the whole world? Nay, that the whole of morality and ethics and spirituality and religion will be true only from the sanction of that one person, and one person alone? Now the Vedantic religion does not require any such personal authority; its sanction is the eternal nature of man, its ethics are based upon the eternal spiritual solidarity of man, already existing, already attained and not to be attained. On the other hand, from the very earliest times, our sages have been feeling conscious of this fact that the vast majority of mankind require a person. They must have a personal God in some form or other. The very Buddha who declared against the existence of a Personal God had not died fifty years before his disciples manufactured a Personal God out of him. This Personal God is necessary, and at the same time we know that instead of and better than vain imaginations of a Personal God, which in ninety-nine cases out of a hundred are unworthy of human worship, we have in this world, living and walking in our midst, living Gods now and then. These are more worthy of worship than any imaginary God, any creation of our imaginations, that is to say, any idea of God which we can make. Sree Krishna is much greater than any ideal of God you or I can make. Buddha is a much higher

ideal, a more living and idolised ideal, than any ideal you or I can conceive of in our minds, and, therefore it is that they always command the worship of mankind, even to the exclusion of all imaginary deities. This our sages knew, and, therefore, left it open to all Indian people to worship such great personages, such incarnations. Nay, the greater of these incarnations goes further.—"Wherever there is an extraordinary spiritual power manifested by external man know that I am there; it is from me that that manifestation comes." That leaves the door open for the Hindu to worship the incarnations of all the countries in the world. The Hindu can worship any sage and any saint from any country whatsoever, and as a fact we know that we go and worship many times in the churches of the Christians, and many, many times in the Mahomedan Mosques, and that is good. Why not? Ours, as I have said, is the universal religion. It is inclusive enough, it is broad enough to include all the ideals. All the ideals of religion that already exist in the world can be immediately included, and we can patiently wait for all the ideals that are to come in the future to be taken in the same fashion, embraced in the infinite arms of the religion of the Vedanta.

This, more or less, is our position with regard to the great sages, the incarnations of God. There are also secondary characters. We find the word Rishi again and again mentioned in the Vedas, and it has become a common word at the present time. The Rishi is the great authority. We have to understand that idea. The definition is that the Rishi is the *Mantra drashta*, the seer of thought. What is the proof of religion?—this was asked in very ancient times. There is no proof in the senses, was the declaration. "From whence words reflect back with thought without reaching the goal. There the eyes cannot reach, neither can the

wind, nor any of the organs"—That has been the declaration for ages and ages. Nature outside cannot give us any answer as to the existence of the soul, the existence of God, the eternal life, the goal of man, and all that. This mind is continually changing, always in a state of flux; it is finite, it is broken into pieces. What can this nature talk of the infinite, the unchangeable, the unbroken, the indivisible, the eternal? It can never be. And whenever mankind has striven in vain to get an answer from dull dead matter, history knows how disastrous the results have been. How comes, then, the knowledge which the Vedas declared? It comes through being a Rishi. This knowledge is not in the senses, but is the senses, the be-all and the end-all of the human being. Who dares say that the senses are the all in all of man. Even in our lives, in the life of everyone of us here, there come moments of calmness, perhaps, when we see before us the death of one we loved, when some shock comes to us, or when extreme blessedness comes to us; many other occasions there are when the mind, as it were, becomes calm, feels for the moment its real nature, and a glimpse of the Infinite beyond, where words cannot reach, nor the mind go, is revealed to us. This is in ordinary life, but it has to be heightened, practised, perfected. Men found out ages ago that the soul is not bound or limited by the senses, no, not even by consciousness. We have to understand that this consciousness is only the name of one link in the infinite chain. Being is not identical with consciousness, but consciousness is only one part of Being. Beyond consciousness is where the bold search. Consciousness is bound by the senses. Beyond that, beyond the senses, men must go in order to arrive at truths of the spiritual world, and there are even now persons who succeed in going beyond the bounds of the

senses. These are called Rishis, because they come face to face with spiritual truths. The proof, therefore, of the Vedas is just the same as the proof of this table before me, *pratyaksham*, direct perception. This I see with the senses, and the truths of spirituality we also see in a superconscious state of the human soul. This Rishi state is not limited by time, or by place, or by sex, or by race. Vatsayana boldly declares that this Rishihood is the common property of the descendant of the sage, of the Aryan, of the non-Aryan, of even the Mlech. This is the sageship of the Vedas, and constantly ought we to remember this ideal of religion in India, which I wish other nations of the world also remember and learn, so that there may be less fight and less quarrel. It is this, that religion is not in books, nor in theories, nor in dogmas, nor in talking, not even in reasoning. It is Being and Becoming. Aye, my friends, until each one of you has become a Rishi and come face to face with spiritual facts, religious life has not begun for you. Until the superconscious opens for you, religion is mere talk, it is all but preparation. You are talking second hand, third hand, and here applies that beautiful saying of Buddha when he had a discussion with some Brahmins. They came discussing about the nature of Brahman, and the great sage asked "Have you seen Brahman?" "No," said the Brahmin; "Or your father?" "No, neither he:" "Or your grandfather?" "I don't think even he saw Him." My friend, whom your father and grandfather never saw, how do you discuss about such a person, and try to put down each other?" That is what the whole world is doing. Let us say in the language of the Vedanta "This Atman is not to be reached by too much talk, no, not even by the highest intellect, no, not even by the study of the Vedas themselves." Let us speak to all the nations

of the world in the language of the Vedas :—" Vain are your fights and your quarrels; have you seen God whom you want to preach? If you have not seen, vain is your preaching; you do not know what you say, and if you have seen God you will not quarrel, your very face will shine." An ancient sage of the Upanishads, sent his son out to learn about Brahman, and the child came back, and the father asked "What have you learnt"? The child replied he had learnt so many sciences. But the father said, "That is nothing, go back." And the son went back, and when he returned again the father asked the same question, and the same number of sciences was the answer from the child. Once more he had to go back, and the next time he came, his whole face was shining, and his father stood up and declared, "Aye, to-day, my child, your face shines like a knower of God." When you have known God your very face will be changed, your voice will be changed, your whole appearance will be changed. You will be a blessing to mankind: none will be able to resist the Rishi. This is the Rishihood, the ideal in our religion. The rest, all these talks, and reasonings, and philosophies, and dualisms, and monisms, even the Vedas themselves are but preparations, secondary. The other is primary. The Vedas, Grammar, Astronomy, &c., all these are secondary; that is supreme knowledge which makes us realise the unchangeable one. Those who realised are the sages whom we find in the Vedas, and we understand how this Rishi is the name of a type, of a class, which every one of us, as true Hindus, is expected to become at some period of our life, and which, to the Hindu, means salvation. Not belief in doctrines, nor going to thousands of temples, nor bathing in all the rivers in the world, but becoming the Rishi, the *Mantra drastha*, that is freedom, that is salvation.

Coming down to later times, there have been great world-moving sages, great incarnations, of whom there have been many, and according to Bhagavatam they also are infinite in number, of whom those that are worshipped most in India are Rama and Krishna. Rama, the ancient idol of the Heroic Ages, the embodiment of truth, of morality, the ideal son, the ideal husband, the ideal father and above all the ideal King, this Rama has been presented before us by the great sage Valmiki. No language can be purer, none chaster, none more beautiful, and at the same time simple, than the language in which the great poet has depicted the life of Rama. And what to speak of Sita? You may exhaust the literature of the world that is past, and I may assure you will have to exhaust the literature of the world of the future before finding another Sita. Sita is unique; the character was once depicted and once for all. Ramas have been, perhaps, several, but Sitas never. She is the very type of the Indian woman as she should be, for all the Indian ideals of a perfected woman have got around that one life of Sita; and here she stands, these thousands of years, commanding the worship of every man, woman, or child, throughout the length and breadth of the land of Aryavartha., There she will always be, glorious Sita, purer than purity itself, all patience, and all suffering. She who suffered that life of suffering without a murmur, she the ever chaste and ever pure wife, she the ideal of the people, the ideal of the gods, the great Sita, our national Goddess she must always remain. And every one of us knows her too well to require much delineation. All our mythology may vanish, even our Vedas may depart, and our Sanskrit language may vanish for ever, but as long as there will be five Hindus living here, speaking the most vulgar patois, there will be the story of Sita present, mark

my words. Sita has gone into the very vitals of our race. She is there in the blood of every Hindu man and woman; we are all children of Sita. Any attempt to modernise our women if it tries to take our women apart from that ideal of Sita, is immediately a failure, as we see every day. The women of India must grow and develop after the foot prints of Sita, and that is the only way.

The next is He who is worshipped in various forms, the favourite ideal of men as well as of women, the ideal of children, as well as grown-up men. I mean He whom the writer of the Bhagavad Gita was not content to call an incarnation but says, "The other incarnations were but parts of the Lord; He Krishna was the Lord Himself." And it is not strange that such adjectives are applied to him when we marvel at the many-sidedness of his character. He was the most wonderful sanyasi, and the most wonderful householder in one, he had the most wonderful amount of *Rajas*, power, and was at the same time, living in the midst of the most wonderful renunciation. Krishna can never be understood until you have studied the Gita, for he was the embodiment of his own teaching. Every one of these incarnations came as a living illustration of what they came to preach. Krishna, the preacher of the Gita, was all his life the embodiment of that song celestial; he was the great illustration of non-attachment. He gives the throne to so many people, never cares for the throne. He, the leader of India, at whose word kings come down from their thrones, never wants to be a king. He is the simple Krishna, ever the same Krishna, who played with the Gopis. Ah, that most marvellous passage of his life the most difficult to understand and which none ought to attempt to understand until he has become perfectly chaste and pure, that most marvellous expansion of love, allegorised and expressed in

that beautiful play at Brindavan, which none can understand but he that has become mad and drunk deep of the cup of love! Who can understand the throes of love of the Gopis—the very ideal of love, love that wants nothing, love that even does not care for heaven, love that does not care for anything in this world, or the world to come? And here, my friends, through this love of the Gopis has been found the only solution of the conflict between the Personal and the Impersonal God. We know how the Personal God is the highest point of human life; we know that it is philosophical to believe in an Impersonal God, immanent in the universe, of whom everything is a manifestation. At the same time, our souls hanker after something concrete, something which we want to grasp, at whose feet we can pour our soul, and so on. The Personal God is, therefore, the highest conception of human nature. Yet reason stands aghast at such an idea. It is the same old, old question which you find discussed in the Brahma Sutras, which you find Draupadi discussing with Yudhistira in the forest,—if there is a Personal God, all merciful, all powerful, why is this hell of an earth here, why did he create this; he must be a partial God. There was no solution, and the only solution that can be found is in what you read, the love of the Gopis, how they hated every adjective that was piled on to Krishna; they did not care to know that He was the Lord of Creation, they did not care to know that He was Almighty, they did not care to know that He was Omnipotent, and so forth. The only thing they understood was that He was the infinite Love, that was all. The Gopis understood Krishna only as the Krishna of Brindavan. He, the leader of the hosts, the king of kings, to them was the shepherd, and the shepherd for ever. I do not want wealth, nor

many people, nor do I want learning; no, not even do I want to go to heaven. Let me be born again and again, but Lord, grant me this, that I may have love for Thee, and that for love's sake." A great landmark in the history of religion is here, the ideal of love for love's sake, work for work's sake, duty for duty's sake, for the first time fell from the lips of the greatest of incarnations, Krishna, and for the first time in the history of humanity, upon the soil of India. The religions of fear and of temptations were gone for ever, and in spite of the fear of hell and temptation to enjoyment in heaven, came the grandest of ideals, love for love's sake, duty for duty's sake, work for work's sake. And what a love! I have told you just now that it is very difficult to understand the love of the Gopis. There are not wanting fools, even in the midst of us, who cannot understand the marvellous significance of that most marvellous of all episodes. There are, let me repeat, impure fools, even born of our blood, who try to shrink from that as if from something impure. For them I have only to say, first make yourselves pure, and you must remember that he who tells the history of the love of the Gopis is none else but Suka Dev. The historian who records this marvellous love of the Gopis is one who was born pure, the eternally pure Suka, the son of Vyasa. So long as there is selfishness in the heart, so long is love of God impossible; it is nothing but shop-keeping. "I give you something, Oh Lord, you give me something." And says the Lord, "if you do not do this, I will take good care of you" when you die. I will rost you all the rest of your lives, perhaps, and so on. So long as such ideas are in the brain, how can one understand the mad throes of the Gopis' love "Oh for one, one kiss of those lips, one who has been kissed by Thee, his thirst for Thee increases for ever, all

sorrows vanish, and we forget love for everything else but for Thee and Thee alone." Aye! forget first the love for gold, and name and fame, and for this little threepenny world of ours. Then, only then, you will understand the love of the Gopis, too holy to be attempted without giving up everything, too sacred to be understood until the soul has become perfectly pure. People with ideas of sex, and of money, and of fame, bubbling up every minute in the heart, daring to criticise and understand the love of the Gopis! That is the very cream of the Krishna incarnation. Even the Gita, the great philosophy itself, does not compare with that madness, for in the Gita the disciple is taught slowly how to walk towards the goal, but here is the madness of enjoyment, the drunkenness of love, where disciples and teachers and teachings and books, and all these things have become one, even the ideas of fear and God, and heaven. Everything has been thrown away. What remains is the madness of love. It is forgetfulness of everything, and the lover sees nothing in the world except that Krishna, and Krishna alone, when the face of every being becomes a Krishna, when his own face looks like Krishna, when his own soul has become tinged with Krishna colour. That was the great Krishna. Do not waste your time upon little details. Take up the frame work, the essence of the life. There may be many historical discrepancies, there may be interpolations in the life of Krishna. All these things may be true, but, at the same time, there must have been a basis, a foundation for this new and tremendous departure. Taking the life of any other sage or prophet, we find that that prophet is only the evolution of what had gone before him, we find that that prophet is only preaching the ideas that had been scattered about his own country even in his own times. Great

doubts may exist even as to whether that prophet existed or not. But here, I challenge any one to show whether these things, these ideals—work for work's sake, love for love's sake, duty for duty's sake, were not original ideas with Krishna, and as such there must have been some one with whom these ideas originated. They could not have been borrowed from anybody else, they were not floating about the atmosphere when Krishna was born. But the Lord Krishna was the first preacher of this; his disciple Vyasa took it up and preached it unto mankind. This is the highest idea to picture. The highest thing we can get out of him is Gopi-Janavallava, the shepherd of Brindavan. When that madness comes in your brain, when you understand the blessed Gopis, then you will understand what love is. When the whole world will vanish, when all other considerations will have died out, when you will become pure-hearted with no other aim, not even the search after truth, then and then alone will rush before you the madness of that love the strength and the power of the infinite love which the Gopis had, that love for love's sake. That is the goal. When you have got that you have got everything.

To come down to the lower stratum, Krishna—the preacher of the Gita. Aye, there is an attempt in India now which is like putting the cart before the horse. Many of our people think that Krishna as the lover of the Gopis is rather something uncanny, and the Europeans do not like it much. Dr. So-and-so does not like it. Certainly then, the Gopis have to go. Without the sanction of Europeans how can Krishna live? He cannot. In the Mahabharata there is no mention of the Gopis except in one or two places, and not very remarkable places. In the prayer of Draupadi there is mention of a Brindavan life

and in the speech of Sisupal there is again mention of this Brindavan. All these are interpolations. What the Europeans do not want must be thrown off. They are interpolations, the mention of the Gopis and of Krishna too. Well, with these men, steeped in commercialism, where even the ideal of religion has become commercial, they are all trying to go to heaven by doing something here; the Banya wants compound interest, wants to lay by something here and enjoy it there—certainly the Gopis have no place in such a system of thought. From that ideal lover we come down to the lower stratum of Krishna, the preacher of the Gita. Even there, no better commentary has been written or can be written. The essence of the Srutis, or of the Upanishads, is hard to be understood, seeing that there are so many commentators, each one trying to interpret in his own way. Then the Lord Himself comes, He who is the inspirer of the Srutis, to show us the meaning of it, as the preacher of Gita, and to-day India wants nothing better, the world wants nothing better than that method of interpretation. It is a wonder that subsequent interpreters of the Scriptures, even commenting upon the Gita, many times could not catch the meaning, many times could not catch the drift. For what do you find in the Gita, and what even in modern commentators? One non-dualistic commentator takes up an Upanishad, there are so many dualistic passages, and he twists and tortures them into some meaning, and wants to bring them all into his own meaning. If a dualistic commentator comes, there are so many non-dualistic texts which he begins to torture to bring them all round to dualistic meaning; but you find in the Gita there is no attempt at torturing any one of them. They are all right, says the Lord; for slowly and gradually the human soul rises up, step after step, from

the gross to the fine, from the fine to finer, until it reaches the absolute, the goal. That is what is in the Gita. Even the Karma Khanda is taken up, and it is shown that it cannot give salvation direct, but indirectly; that is also valid; images are valid indirectly; ceremonies, forms, everything is valid only with one condition, purity of the heart. For a worship is valid and leads to the goal, if the heart is pure and the heart is sincere; and all these various modes of worship are necessary, else, why should they be here? Religions and sects are not the work of hypocrites and wicked people, who invented all these to get a little money, as some of our modern men want to think. However reasonable that explanation may seem, it is not true, and they were not invented that way at all. They are the outcome of the necessity of the human soul. They are all here to satisfy the *hankering* and *thirst* of different classes of human minds, and you need not preach against them. The day when that necessity will cease they vanish along with the cessation of that necessity, and so long as that necessity remains they must be there, in spite of your preaching, in spite of your criticisms. You may bring the sword or the gun into play, you may deluge the world with human blood, but so long as there is a necessity for idols they must remain. These forms, and all the various steps in religion will remain, and we understand from the Lord Sri Krishna why they should remain.

A rather sadder chapter of India's history comes now. In the Gita we already hear the distant sound of conflicts of sects, and the Lord comes in the middle to harmonise them all, the great preacher of harmony, the greatest teacher of harmony, Lord Krishna Himself. He says, "In me they are all strung like pearls upon a thread." We already hear the distant sounds, the murmurs of

the conflict, and possibly there was a period of harmony and calmness when it broke anew, not only on religious grounds, but most possibly on caste grounds,—the fight between the two powerful factors in our community, the kings and the priests. And from the topmost crest of the wave that deluged India for nearly a thousand years we see another glorious figure, and that was our Gautama Sakyamuni. You all know about his teachings and preachings. We worship Him as God incarnate, the greatest, the boldest preacher of morality that the world ever saw, the greatest Karma Yogi; as a disciple of himself, as it were, the same Krishna came to show how to make his theories practical; there came once again the same voice that in the Gita preached, "The least bit done of this religion saves from great fear. Women, or Vaisyas, or even Sudras, all reach the highest goal." Breaking the bondages of all, the chains of all, declaring liberty to all to reach the highest goal come the words of the Gita, rolls like thunder the mighty voice of Krishna—"Even in this life they have conquered heaven whose minds are firmly fixed upon the sameness, for God is pure and the same to all, therefore, such are said to be living in God." "Thus seeing the same Lord equally present everywhere the sage does not injure self with self, and thus reaches the highest goal." As it were to give a living example of this preaching, as it were to make at least one part of it practical, the preacher himself came in another form, and this was Sakyamuni, the preacher to the poor and the miserable, he who rejected even the language of the Gods to speak in the language of the people, so that he might reach the hearts of the people, he who gave up a throne to live with beggars, and the poor, and the downcast, he who pressed the Pariah unto his breast like a second Rama. All of you know about

his great work, his grand character. But the work had one great defect, and for that we are suffering even to-day. No blame attaches to the Lord. He is pure and glorious, but unfortunately such high ideals could not be well assimilated by the different uncivilised and uncultured races of mankind who flocked within the fold of the Aryans. These races, with varieties of superstition and hideous worship rushed within the fold of the Aryan and for a time appeared as if they had become civilised, but before a century had passed, they brought out their snakes, their ghosts, and all the other things their ancestors used to worship, and thus the whole of India became one degraded mass of superstition. The earlier Buddhists in their rage against the killing of animal had denounced the sacrifices of the Vedas; and these sacrifices were used to be held in every house. There was a fire burning, and that was all the paraphernalia of worship. These sacrifices were obliterated, and in their place came gorgeous temples, gorgeous ceremonies, and gorgeous priests, and all that you see in India in modern times. I smile when I read books written by some modern people who ought to have known better that Buddha was the destroyer of Brahminical idolatry. Little do they know that Buddhism created Brahminism and idolatry in India. There was a book written about a year or two ago by a Russian gentleman who claimed to have found out a very curious life of Jesus Christ, and in one part of the book he says that Christ went to the Temple of Juggernath to study with the Brahmins, but became disgusted with their exclusiveness and their idols, and so he went to the Lamas of Thibet instead, became perfect, and went home. To any man who knows anything about Indian History that very line proves that the whole thing was a fraud, because the

Temple of Juggernath is an old Buddhistic Temple. We took this and others over and re-Hinduised them. We shall have to do many things like that yet. In Juggernath there was not one Brahmin then, and yet we are told that Jesus Christ came to study with the Brahmins there. Thus says our great Russian archæologist. Thus in spite of the preaching of mercy unto animals, in spite of the sublime ethical religion, in spite of the hair-splitting discussions about the existence of a permanent soul, or the non-existence of a permanent soul, the whole building of Buddhism tumbled down peace-meal; and the ruin was simply hideous. I have neither the time nor the inclination to describe to you the hideousness that came in the wake of Buddhism. The most hideous ceremonies, the most horrible, the most obscene books that human hands ever wrote or the human brain ever conceived, the most bestial forms that ever passed under the name of religion, have all been the creation of degraded Buddhism.

But India has to live, and the spirit of the Lord descended again. He who declared that "I will come whenever virtue subsides" came again, and this time the manifestation was in the South, and up rose that young Brahmin of whom it has been declared that at the age of 16 he had completed all his writings; the marvellous boy Sankara Acharya arose. The writings of this boy of 16 are the wonders of the modern world, and thus was the boy. He wanted to bring back the Indian world to its pristine purity, but think of the amount of the task before him. I have told you a few points about the state of things that existed in India. All these horrors that you are trying to reform are the outcome of that reign of degradation. The Tartars and the Balluchis and all the hideous races of mankind came to India and

became Buddhists, and assimilated with us, and brought their national customs, and the whole of our national life became a huge page of the most horrible and the most bestial customs. That was the inheritance which that boy got from the Buddhists, and since that time to this, the whole world in India is a re-conquest of this Buddhistic degradation by the Vedanta. It is still going on, not yet finished. Sankara came, a great philosopher, and showed that the real essence of Buddhism and that of the Vedanta are not very different, but that the disciples did not understand the master, and have degraded themselves, denied the existence of the soul and of God, and have become Atheists. That was what Sankara showed, and all the Buddhists began to come into the old religion. But then they had become laden with all these forms; what could be done?

Then came the brilliant Ramanuja—Sankara with his great intellect, I am afraid, had not as great a heart. Ramanuja's heart was greater. He felt for the down-trodden, he sympathised with them. He took up the ceremonies, the accretions that had gathered, made them pure so far as they could be, and instituted new ceremonies, new methods of worship, for the people who absolutely required these. At the same time, he opened the door to the highest spiritual worship, from the Brahmin to the Pariah. That was Ramanuja's work. That work rolled on, invaded the north, was taken up by some great leaders there—that was much later, during the Mohammedan rule—and the brightest of these prophets of modern times in the north was Chaitanya, and you may mark one characteristic since the time of Ramanuja,—opening the door of spirituality to everyone. That has been the watchword of all the prophets

succeeding Ramanuja, as it had been the watchword of all the prophets before Sankara. I do not know why Sankara should be represented as rather exclusive; I do not find anything in his writings which is exclusive. As in the case of the declarations of the Lord Buddha, this exclusiveness that has been attributed to Sankara's teachings is most possibly not due to his teachings but to the incapacity of his disciples. This one great northern sage Chaitanya I will mention as the last and then finish. He represented the mad love of the Gopis. Himself a Brahmin, born of one of the most rationalistic families of the day, himself a professor of logic fighting and gaining a word-victory—for, this he had learnt from his childhood as the highest ideal of life—and yet through the mercy of some sage the whole life of that man became changed, he gave up his fight, his quarrels, his professorship of logic, and became one of the greatest teachers of Bhakti the world has ever known. Mad Chaitanya! His Bhakti rolled over the whole land of Bengal, bringing solace to every one. His love knew no bounds. The saint or the sinner, the Hindu or the Mohammedan, the pure or the impure, the prostitute, the street walker—all had a share in his love, all had a share in his mercy, and even to the present day, although greatly degenerated, as everything does, yet his church is the refuge of the poor, of the downtrodden, of the outcast, of the weak, of those who have been rejected by all society. But at the same time, I must remark for truth's sake that we find this. In the philosophic sects we find wonderful liberalism. There is not a man who follows Sankara who will say that all the different sects of India are really different. At the same time, he was a tremendous upholder of exclusiveness as regards caste. But with

every Vaishnavite preaher, we find a wonderful liberalism as to the teaching of caste questions, but exclusiveness as regards religious questions.

The one had a great head, the other a large heart, and the time was ripe for one to be born the embodiment of both head and heart, the time was ripe for one to be born, who in one body would have the brilliant intellect of Sankara and the wonderfully expansive, infinite heart of Chaitanya, one who would see in every sect the same working, the same God, as well as see God in every being, one whose heart would weep for the poor, for the weak, for the outcast, for the downtrodden, for every one in this world, inside India or outside India, and at the same time, whose grand brilliant intellect would conceive of such noble thoughts as would harmonise all conflicting sects, not only in India but outside of India; and bring a marvellous harmony, the universal religion of head and heart into existence, and such a man was born and I had the good fortune to sit under his feet for years. The time was ripe, it was necessary that such a man should be born, and he came, and the most wonderful part of it was that his life's work was just near a city which was full of Western thoughts, which had run mad after these occidental ideas, a city which had become more Europeanised than any other city in India. There he was born, without any book-learning whatsoever, he could not write his own name,—this great intellect, never could write his own name—but everybody, the most brilliant graduates of our university found in him an intellectual giant. That was a curious man. It is a long, long story and I have no time to tell anything about him to-night. I had better stop, only mentioning the great Sri Ramakrishna, the fulfilment of the Indian sages,

the sage for the present time, one whose teaching is just now in the present time, most beneficial. And mark the Divine power working behind the man. The son of a poor priest, born in one of the wayside villages, unknown and unthought of, to-day is worshipped literally by thousands in Europe and America, and to-morrow will be worshipped by thousands more. Who knows the plans of the Lord? Now, my brothers, if you do not see the hand, the finger of Providence, it is because you are blind, born blind indeed. If time comes, and another opportunity, I will speak to you about him more fully, only let me say now that if I have told you one word of truth it was his and his alone, and if I have told you many things which were not true, which were not correct, which were not beneficial to the human race, it was all mine, and on me is the responsibility.

——:o:——

CHRIST, THE MESSENGER.*

THE wave rises on the ocean; there is a hollow. Again another wave rises, perhaps, bigger than the former, to fall down again; similarly, again to rise—driving onward. In the march of events, we notice the rise and the fall. And we generally look towards the rise, forgetting the fall. Both are necessary. Both are great.

This is the nature of the universe. Whether in the world of our thoughts, the world of our relations, in society, or in our spiritual affairs, the same movement of succession, of rises and falls, is going on. Hence the liberal ideals, great predominances in the march of events, are marshalled ahead, to sink down, as it were, to digest, to ruminate, over the past; to adjust, to conserve, to gather strength for a rise once more and a bigger rise.

The history of nations, also, has been like that. The great soul, the Messenger we are to study this afternoon, came at a period of the history of his race which we may well designate as a great fall. You catch only little bits of glimpses here and there of the stray records that have been kept of his sayings and doings; for, verily it has been said well that the doings and sayings of that great soul would fill the world if they had been all written down. And these eighteen months of his ministry were like one compressed, concentrated age, which it has taken nineteen hundred years to unfold, and who knows how long yet it will take.

*Notes from a lecture delivered by Swami Vivekananda at Los Angles, California, in 1900.

You and I, little men, we are simply the recipients of just a little energy. A few minutes, a few hours, a few years at best, are enough to spend it all out, to stretch it out, as it were, to its fullest length, and we are gone for ever. But mark this giant that came: centuries and ages pass; yet the energy that he left upon the world is not yet stretched, not yet expended to its full. It goes on, almost adding new vigour as ages roll on.

Now, what you see in the life of Christ is the life of all the past. The life of every man is, in a manner, the life of the past. It comes to him through heredity, through surroundings, through education, through his own reincarnation,—the past of the race. In a manner, the past of the earth, the past of the whole world, is there upon every soul. What are we, in the present, but a result, an effect in the hands of that infinite past? What are we but floating wavelets in the eternal current of events, irresistibly moved forward and onward and incapable of rest.

But you and I are only little things, bubbles. There are some giant waves, always, in the ocean of affairs; and in you and I, the life of the past race has been embodied only a little; but there are giants who embody, as it were, almost the whole of the past and who stretch out hands for the future. These are the sign posts of the march of humanity, here and there, gigantic, their shadow covering the earth, they stand undying, eternal! Here they are, verily. As it has been said by the same Messenger: "None hath seen God; but they have seen the Son." And that is true. And where to see God but in the Son? It is true that you and I, the poorest of us, the meanest, even embody that God, even reflect that God. The vibration of light is everywhere omnipresent, but we have to strike out the light of the lamp there, and then we human

beings see that He is omnipresent. The omnipresent God of the universe cannot be seen until He is reflected by these giant lamps of the earth—the prophets, the man-gods, the incarnations, the embodiments of Gods.

Just think of this. We all know that God exists, and yet we don't see Him, we don't understand Him. Take one of these great Messengers of light; compare their character with the highest ideal of God you ever formed and you find that your God falls low, and that that character rises. You cannot even form of God a higher ideal than what the actually embodied have practically realized, laid before us as an example. Is it wrong, therefore, to worship these as Gods? Is it a sin to fall at the feet of these man-gods, and worship them as the only divine beings in the world? If they are really, actually, higher than all my conception of God, what harm if they be worshipped? Not only is there no harm, but it is the only possible and positive way of worship. Try, however you may, by struggle, by abstraction, by whatsoever method you may; but so long as you are a man in the world of men, your world is human, your religion human, and your God human. And that has got to be. And whosoever is not practical enough to take up an actually existing thing, has to give up something which he cannot grasp, which is an abstraction, away distant and difficult of approach except through a concrete medium. Therefore, these incarnations of God have been worshipped in all ages and everywhere.

This afternoon we are to study a bit of the life of the incarnation of the Jews. The Jews were in that state which I call a state of fall between two waves: a state of conservatism, a state where the human mind is, as it were, tired for the time being of moving forward, and is taking

care only of what is there already; a state when the attention is more upon particulars, upon details, than upon great, general and bigger problems of life; a state of realisation, rather than of towing ahead; a state of suffering more than of doing.

Mark you, I do not blame this state of things. We have no right to criticise it. Because, had it not been for this fall, the next rise, which was embodied in Jesus of Nazareth, would have been impossible. The Pharisees and Sudducees might have been vulgar; the Pharisees and Sudducees,—why, they might have been doing things which they ought not to have done; they have been, even, hypocrites; but whatever they were, these parties, were the very cause of which the Messenger was the effect. The Pharisees and Sudducees were the very impetus which came out, at the other end, as the gigantic brain of the Jesus of Nazareth.

The attention to formulas, to forms, to everyday details of religion, to rituals, may sometimes be laughed at, but within them is strength. Many times in the rushing forward we lose much strength. As a fact, you know that the fanatic is stronger than the liberal man. Even the fanatic, therefore, has one great virtue: he conserves energy, a tremendous amount. As with the individual, so with the race, is energy gathered to be conserved. Hemmed in all around by external enemies, driven to focus in a centre, by the Romans, by the Hellenic tendencies in the world of intellect, by waves from Persia and India and Alexandria; hemmed in physically, mentally, morally, there stood the race with an inherent, conservative, tremendous strength, which their descendants have not lost even to-day. And the race was forced to concentrate all its energies upon that one focus Jerusalem and

Judaism; and, like all power when it is once gathered, it cannot remain collected; it must expend and expand itself. There is no power on earth which you can keep long confined within a narrow limit. You cannot compress it so as not to allow of expansion at a subsequent period.

And this concentration of energy amongst the race, the Jews, found its expression at the next period, in the rise of Christianity. The gathered streams collected into a head. Gradually, all these little streams came and joined together, became a surging wave; and on the top of that wave we find standing the character of Jesus of Nazareth. Every prophet, thus, is a creature of his own times; the creature of the past of his race, he, himself, is the creator of the future. The cause of to-day is the effect of the past and the cause for the future. Thus stands the Messenger. In him was embodied all that was the best and greatest in his own race; the meaning, the life, for which that race had struggled for ages; and he, himself, is the impetus for the future, not only to his own race but to unnumbered other races of the world.

We must bear another fact in mind: that my point of view of the great prophet of Nazareth would be one of the Orient. Many times you forget, also, that the Nazarene himself was an Oriental of Orientals. With all your attempts to paint him with blue eyes and yellow hair, still the Nazarene was an oriental. The similes, the imageries, in which the Bible is written; the scenes, the locations, the attitudes, the groups; all that poetry and symbol, talk to you of the orient: the bright sky, the heat, the sun, the desert, the thirsty men and animals; wells, and men and women coming with pitchers on the head, to fill at the wells; the flocks, the ploughmen, the cultivation that is going on; the

mill and wheel, the mill pond, the mill stones:—all these are to-day in Asia.

The voice of Asia has been the voice of religion. The voice of Europe is the voice of politics. Each is great in its own sphere. The voice of Europe is the voice of ancient Greece. To the Greek mind, his immediate society was all in all. Beyond that, it is Barbarian—none but the Greek has the right to live—none else. Whatever the Greeks do is right and correct; whatever else there exists in the world is neither right nor correct nor should be allowed to live. It is intensely human in its sympathies; intensely natural; intensely artistic, therefore. The Greek man lives entirely in this world. He does not care to dream. Even his poetry is practical. His gods and goddesses are human beings, intensely human, with all human passions and feelings almost as it is with one of us. He loves what is beautiful; what is beautiful in nature; but, mind you, it is always the external nature: the beauty of the hills, of the snows, of the flowers; the beauty of forms and of figures; the beauty in the human face, and more, in the human form. That is what the Greeks liked; and the Greeks being the teachers of all subsequent Europeans, this is the voice of Europe.

There is another type in Asia. Think of that vast, huge continent, whose mountain tops go beyond the clouds, almost touching the canopy of heaven's blue; a rolling desert, thousands upon thousands of miles, where we cannot get a drop of water nor a blade of grass will grow; forests interminable rivers rolling down like a fresh ocean into the sea. In the midst of all these surroundings, the oriental love of the beautiful and of the sublime took another turn. It meant inside, and not outside. There is also the thirst for nature, and there is also the same thirst

for excellence, the same idea of Greek and Barbarian; but it has become a huger circle. In Asia even to-day, birth or colour or language never makes a race. That which makes a race is its religion. We are all Christians, we are all Mahomedans; we are all Hindus, or all Buddhists. No matter if one is a Chinaman, or the other Buddhist is a man from Persia, they think that they are brothers, because of their religion. Religion is the tie, the unity of humanity. And then, the Oriental, for the same reason, is a visionary, is a dreamer born. The ripples of the waterfalls, the songs of the birds, the beauties of the sun and moon and the stars and the whole earth, are pleasant enough; but they are not sufficient for the oriental mind. He wants to dream a dream beyond. He wants to go beyond the present. The present, as it were, is nothing to him. And it (the orient) has been the cradle of the human race for ages. And all the vicissitudes of fortune are there. Kingdoms succeeding kingdoms; empires succeeding empires; human power, glory and wealth, all rolling down there: a Golgotha of power, of kingdoms, of learning. No wonder the oriental mind looks with contempt upon the things of this world and naturally wants to see something that changeth not, something which dieth not, something which in the midst of this world of misery and death is eternal, joyful, undying. An oriental prophet never tires of insisting upon these ideals; and as for prophets you may also remember that without one exception all the Messengers were Orientals.

We see, therefore, in the life of this great Messenger of life, the first watchword, "Not this life, but something higher", and like the true son of the orient, he is practical in that. You people of the West are practical in your own departments—in military affairs, in managing politic-

al circles, you are very practical. There, perhaps, the oriental is not; but he is practical in his own field: he is practical in religion. If he preaches a philosophy, to-morrow there are hundreds who will struggle their best to make it practical in their lives. If a man preaches that standing on one foot would lead to salvation he will immediately get five hundred to stand on one foot, just for salvation. You may call it ludicrous; but mark you, beneath their philosophy is that intense practicality. In the West, plans of salvation mean intellectual gymnastics,—never to be worked up, never to be brought into practical life. The preacher who talks the best is the greatest preacher.

So, Jesus of Nazareth, we find him, in the first place, the true son of the Orient—intensely practical. He has no faith in this world and all its belongings; it is evanescent: it goes. No need of text-torturing, as is the fashion in the West in modern times; no need of stretching out texts until they will not stretch more. Texts are not India-rubber, and even that has its limits. Now no making of religion panders to the same sense vanity of the present day.

Mark you, let us be all honest. If we cannot follow, let us confess our weakness; but do not degrade the ideal, do no not try to pull the ideal down. One gets sick at heart when the different accounts of his life that the Western people give are true. I do not know what he was not. One would make him a great politician, stumping the country for a Presidential election; another perhaps, would make of him a great military general; another a great patriotic Jew and so on.

Well, but the best commentary on the life of a great teacher is his own life. Is there any warrant in the books for all such assumptions? "The birds have their nests,

and the beasts have their lairs, but the son of Man hath nowhere to lay down his head."

But you cannot do that. Confess and be quiet; but don't try to torture texts.

That, he says, is the only way to salvation; he lays down no other.

Let us confess in sackcloth and ashes that we cannot do that. We still have fondness for "me" and "mine." We want property, money, wealth. Woe unto us! Let us confess, and do not put to shame that great Teacher of Humanity! He had no family ties. But do you think that that man had any physical ideas in him? Do you think that this mass of light, this god and not-man, came down to be the brother of animals? And yet, they make him preach all sorts, even low sexual things. He had none! He was a soul! Nothing but a soul, just working, as it were, a body, for the good of humanity, and that was all his relation to the body. Oh! not that. In the soul there is neither man nor woman. No, no! The disembodied soul has no relationship to the animal, no relationship to the body. The ideal may be high: always beyond us. Never mind: it is the ideal. Let us confess it is so;—but we cannot approach it yet.

There he was. No other occupation in life; no other thought except that one, that he was a Spirit. He was a disembodied, unfettered, unbound spirit. And not only so, but he, with his marvellous vision, had found that every man and woman whether of Jew or of Gentile, whether he was a rich man or poor man, whether a saint or sinner, was the embodiment of such an undying Spirit as was his own. And, therefore, the one work his whole life showed was calling upon them to realize their own spiritual nature. "Come up," he says, "and give up these low and vile

dreams that you are low and that you are poor. Think not, as slaves, that you are tyrannized over and trampled, for, within you is something that can never be tyrannized over, never be trampled, never be troubled, never be killed. 'Thou art the Son of God; man immortal; a spirit." "Know," he declared, "the kingdom of Heaven is within thee." "I and my Father are one." Dare you stand and say that? Not only, "I am the son of God"; but if I am pure enough, I will also find in the heart of my heart, "I and my Father are one". That was what Jesus of Nazareth said. He never talks of this world and of this life. Nothing to do with it; except that he wants to get hold of the world as it is, give it a push and drive it forward, and onward, till the whole world has reached unto the effulgent Light of God; till everyone has realized his spiritual nature, death is vanquished and misery is banished.

We know the different stories that have been written about Him. We know the scholars and their writings, we know the higher criticism; we know all that has been done by study, and all that; we are not here to discuss how much of the New Testament is true; we are not here to discuss how much of that life is historical. It does not matter at all whether the New Testament was ever written within five hundred years of this event; no; it doesn't matter, even how much of that life is true. But there is something behind. Even to imitate, we want something to imitate. To tell a lie, you have to imitate a truth and that truth is a fact. You cannot imitate that which never existed. You cannot imitate that which you never perceived, can you?

But there must have been a nucleus; a tremendous power that came down, a marvellous manifestation of power;—and of that we are speaking. So, therefore, we

are not afraid of all the criticisms of the scholars. It stands there. I, as an oriental, if I am to worship Jesus of Nazareth, there is only one way left to me: to worship Him as God and nothing else. Think of that.

No right to worship, do you mean to say? Bring him down to all political ideas, and simply pay him a little respect, as one of the Presidents of the United States, or something else? Why should we worship at all. Our writers say:—

"These great children of light, who manifest the light themselves, who are light themselves, they being worshipped become, as it were, one with us and we become one with them."

For, you see, in three ways man perceives God: at first the low intellect, the little uneducated man, undeveloped; with him, God is far away, up in the heavens somewhere, sitting there on a throne. He is a great judge; he is a fire: he is a terror. Now, that is good, for there is nothing bad. You must remember that humanity travels not from error to truth, but from truth to truth. It may be, if you like it better, from lower truth to higher truth; but never from error to truth. Suppose you start from here and travel towards the sun in a straight line. From here the sun looks only small in size. Suppose you go forward a million miles: the sun will be much bigger; and so on and on. At every stage the sun is becoming bigger and huger. Suppose twenty thousand photographs have been taken of this very sun, from different points: these twenty thousand when looked upon will certainly differ each from the other. But can you deny that each is a photograph of the same sun? So all forms of religion, low or high, are just different stages towards that eternal

state of light which is God himself. Some embody a lower view, some a higher, and that is all the difference. Therefore, the religion of the unthinking masses must be, and have always been, all over the world, of a God who is outside of the universe; who lives in Heaven; who governs from that place; who is a punisher of the bad and rewarder of the good, and so on.

As man advanced, he began to feel that God was omnipresent; that God must be in us; that God must be everywhere. He is not a distant God. He is clearly the Soul of our souls. As my soul is moving my body, so, that which you call God is the mover, even of my soul. Soul within soul!

And a few individuals who had developed enough and were pure enough, went farther. At last, they found God. Says the New Testament: "Blessed are the pure in spirit, for they shall see God." And, at last, they found God: they, themselves, and the Father were one.

You find all these three stages taught by the Great Teacher in the New Testament. You see the common prayer:—mark you, it is the "common prayer" because it is for the masses, for the uneducated, for the illiterate—"Our Father which art in Heaven, hallowed be Thy name" and so on; a simple, material, ignorant child's simple prayer.

To a higher circle, to those who had grown a little higher, here you have another teaching: "For, as I am in thee, and ye in me, so we are all one in the Father." Do you remember that?

And then, when the Jews asked him what he was, he declared that he and his father were one; and the Jews thought that that was blasphemy. "What do you

mean by that?" That has been also told by your old prophets: "Know ye not that ye are gods?"

Mark the same three stages; it is easier for you to begin with the first and end with the last.

All these are there. But the Messenger had come to show the path. It is not in forms that the spirit is; it is not in all sorts of vexations and knotty problems of philosophy that you know the spirit. Better you had no learning; better you never read a book in your life. These are not at all necessary for salvation. Nor wealth, nor position, nor power; no, not even learning; but what is necessary is that one thing: "Blessed are the pure in spirit," for the spirit in its own nature is pure. How else can it be? It is of God; it has come from God. In the language of the Bible, "It is the breath of God"; in the language of the Koran, "It is the soul of God." Do you mean to say that the Spirit of God can be impure, ever? But alas, it has been, as it were, covered over with the dust and dirt of ages,—our own work of good and evil; various works which were not correct, which were not true, have covered the same spirit with the dust and dirt and ignorance of ages. It is only required to clean away this dust and dirt, and there it is; it shines immediately. "Blessed are the pure in spirit for they shall see God for the Kingdom of Heaven is within." It is there. "Where goest thou to seek for the Kingdom of God?" says Jesus af Nazareth. "It is there, inside you." Cleanse the spirit, and it is there. It is already yours. What is not yours, how can you get it? It is yours by right; yours. You are the heirs of immortality, sons of your Eternal Father.

This is the great lesson of the Messenger. And the other great lesson, which is the basis of all religion, is

renunciation. Now make the spirit pure. Renunciation! "Give up all that thou hast and follow me," he said to Nicodemus. Nicodemus fled. He dared not give up. We are all more or less like that. The voice is going on day and night. In the midst of our pleasures and joys, in the midst of worldly things, we think that we have forgotten everything else. There is the pause of a moment and the voice rings in the ear: "Give up all that thou hast and follow me." "For him that giveth up this life, he findeth the life immortal." There it is. In the midst of all our weakness there is a moment of pause and the voice rings: "Give up all that thou hast; give it to the poor and follow me." This is the one ideal he preaches, and this has been the ideal preached by all the great prophets of the world: renounce. What is meant by this renunciation? There is only one ideal in morality: unselfishness. Be selfless. The ideal is perfect unselfishness. When a man is struck on the right cheek, he turns to the striker the left also. When a man carries off another's coat, the other gives away his cloak also.

But we work as best as we can, without dragging the ideal down. Let us confess that here is the ideal: when a man has no more self, no possessions, nothing to call "me or mine," given up entirely himself, destroyed himself, he is nothing, and he is not himself, in that man is God Himself; for the self-will is gone, crushed out, annihilated. That is the ideal man. We cannot reach that yet: yet, let us worship the ideal; and slowly, with faltering steps it may be, struggle to reach the ideal. May be to-morrow, may be a thousand years hence, but that ideal has to be reached. For it is not only the means, but it is the end. It is salvation itself to be unselfish, perfectly selfless, for the man dies, and God alone remains.

One more point. All the teachers of humanity are unselfish. Suppose here were Jesus of Nazareth teaching; and a man came and told him: "What you teach is beautiful; I believe that it is the way to perfection, and I am ready to practise it; but, mind you, I will have nothing to do with you or your name;" what would be the answer of Jesus of Nazareth? "Certainly; go on, brother, be good; advance onward. I do not care whether you give me the credit or not. I never have been a shop-keeper. I don't trade in religion. These are truths, and truth is nobody's property. No body can patent truth. Truth is God Himself. Go on!" But what the disciple says now is:—"No matter whether you practise the teachings or not. Do you give credit to the Man, or not? If you credit the Master, you will be saved; if not, that is very hard for you." And thus the whole thing was developed, and all the struggle and fight is just that. They do not know that in imposing that difference they are, in a manner, bringing shame to the very man they want to honour,—the very man that would have shrunk with shame at such an idea. What did he care if there was one man in the world that remembered him, or not? He had to deliver his message. He did it, and went away. And twenty thousand times, if he had twenty thousand lives he would have given them up, for the poorest man in the world; if he had to be tortured millions of times, for a million samaritan women, and if for each one of them the sacrifice of his own life would be the only condition of salvation, he would have done it, and without having his name known to a single man afterwards. Quiet, unknown, silent, would he work, just as the Lord works. Just think of the disciples!—whether good or bad—I may be a perfect man: perfectly unselfish;—it does not matter:—"You must give credit to our Teacher, to

our Saint; else, you are no body." Why? What is the origin of this superstition, this misery, they think that the Lord can manifest himself only once, once alone. There is the whole mistake. God manifests himself in man to you. But throughout nature what happens once must have been happening, and must happen always. There is nothing in nature which is not bound by law; and that means whatever happens once must go on and must have been going on.

In India they have the same idea of incarnations of God, but here is one of their great incarnations, Krishna, whose sermon, the Bhagavad Gita, some of you have read, and you would mark the passage: "Whenever virtue subsides and immorality prevails, whenever the world is going down, I come to help it forward; and thus I am doing from time to time and place to place. Therefore, wherever thou findest a great soul of immense power and purity struggling to raise humanity, know that I am there and fall down and worship."

Let us, therefore, find God not only in Jesus of Nazareth but in all the great ones that have preceded him, in all that came after him, and all that are yet to come. Our worship is unbounded and free. They are all manifestations of the same infinite God. They were all pure, unselfish; struggled, and gave up their lives for us poor human beings. They all and each of them bore vicarious atonement for everyone of us, and also for all that are to come hereafter.

In a sense, you are all, every one of you, one of these prophets, bearing the burden of the world on your own shoulders. Have you ever seen a man, have you ever seen a woman, who is not quietly, patiently, bearing his or her little burden of life? The great prophets were giants—

they bore a gigantic world on their shoulders. We are punies and pigmies, and yet, we are doing the same task; our little circle, in our little homes, our little crosses we are bearing. There is none so evil, none so bad, who has not some cross somewhere. There is no soul in the world, but has a skeleton hanging behind; and with all our mistakes, with all our evil deeds and evil thoughts, there is still the golden thread somewhere, there is one bright spot somewhere, in which we are always in touch with the divine. For, know for certain, the moment that the touch of the divine is lost there would be annihilation. And because none is going to be annihilated, there is always in the heart of our hearts however low and degraded we may be, there is somewhere one little circle of light which is in constant touch with the divine.

Thus, our salutations go to all the past prophets, whose teachings and lives we have inherited, whatever might have been their race or clime; our salutations go to all those men and women, god-like, who are working to help humanity, whatever be the race, the colour or the birth. Our salutation to those who are coming in the future, living Gods, working unselfishly for our descendants.

——: o :——

THE RELATION OF BUDDHISM TO HINDUISM.

I am not a Buddhist, as you have heard, and yet I am. If China, or Japan, or Ceylon follow the teachings of the Great Master, India worships Him as God incarnate on earth. You have just now heard that I am going to criticise Buddhism, but by that I wish you to understand only this. Far be it from me to criticise him whom I worship as God incarnate on earth. But our views upon Buddha are that he was not understood properly by his disciples. The relation between Hinduism (by Hinduism, I mean the religion of the Vedas) and what is called Buddhism at the present day, is nearly the same as between Buddhism and Christianity. *Jesus Christ* was a Jew, and *Shakya Muni* was a Hindu, but with this difference; the Jews rejected *Jesus Christ*, nay, crucified Him, and the Hindu has exalted *Shakya Muni* to the seat of Divinity and worships Him. But the real difference that we Hindus want to show between modern Buddhism and what we should understand as the teachings of Lord *Buddha*, lies principally in this; *Shakya Muni* came to preach nothing new. He also like *Jesus*, came to fulfil and not to destroy. Again, I repeat,—*Shakya Muni* came not to destroy, but he was the fulfilment, the logical conclusion, the logical development of the religion of the Hindus.

The religion of the Hindus is divided into two parts, the ceremonial and the spiritual; the spiritual portion is specially studied by the monks.

In that there is no caste. A man from the highest caste and a man from the lowest may become a monk in India and the two castes become equal. In religion there is no caste; caste is simply a social condition. *Shakya Muni*—himself was a monk, and to his glory he had the large-heartedness to bring out the truth from the hidden *Vedas* and throw it broadcast all over the world. He was the first being in the world who brought missionarising into practice—nay, he was the first to conceive the idea of proselytising.

The great glory of the Master lay in his wonderful sympathy for everybody especially for the ignorant and the poor. Some of his disciples were Brahmans. When Buddha was teaching, Sanskrit was no more the spoken language in India. It was then only in the books of the learned. Some of Buddha's Brahman disciples wanted to translate his teachings into Sanskrit, but he steadily told them "I am for the poor, for the people; let me speak in the tongue of the people." And so to this day the great bulk of his teachings are in the vernacular of that day in India.

Whatever may be the position of Philosophy, whatever may be the position of Metaphysics, so long as there is such a thing as death in the world, so long as there is such a thing as weakness in the human heart, so long as there is a cry going out of the heart of man in his very weakness, there shall be a faith in God.

On the philosophic side the disciples of the great Master dashed themselves against the eternal rocks of the *Vedas* and could not crush them, and on the other side they took away from the nation that eternal God to which every man and woman clings so fondly. And the result was that it had to die its natural death in India, and at the

present day there is not one man or woman who calls himself a Buddhist in India, the motherland of its birth.

On the other hand, Brahminism lost something—that reforming zeal, that wonderful sympathy and charity for everybody, that wonderful leaven which Buddhism brought into the masses and which rendered Indian society so great that a Greek historian who writes about India was led to say that no Hindu was known to tell an untruth and no Hindu woman was known to be unchaste.

We cannot live without you, nor you without us. Then believe that separation has shown to us, that you cannot stand without the brain and philosophy of the Brahman, nor we without your heart. This separation between the Buddhists and the Brahmans is the cause of the downfall of India. That is why India is populated by 300,000,000, of beggars, and that is why India has been the slave of conquerors for the last 1,000 years. Let us then join the wonderful intellect of the Brahman with the heart, the noble soul, the wonderful humanising power of the Great Master.

——:o:——

THE RAMAYANA.*

THERE are two big epics in the Sanskrit language which are very ancient. Of course there are hundreds of other epic poems, as Sanskrit has continued down to the present day as literature although it has ceased to be a spoken language more than two thousand years. I am speaking to you now of the two most ancient epics, as they embody the manners and customs, the state of society, civilization, etc., of the ancient Indians. The oldest of these is called "Ramayana," the Life of Rama. There was some poetical literature, of course, before that; but the most part of the Vedas, the sacred books of the Hindus, are written in a peculiar sort of metre. But this book is deemed, by common consent in India, as the first beginnings of poetry.

The name of the poet or sage is Valmiki. Later on, a great many poetical stories were fastened upon the ancient poet. At last, it became a very beautiful arrangement without an equal in the literature of the world.

There was a young man, who could not in any way support his family. He was strong and vigorous, and became a highway robber: he held up persons in the street, and robbed them; but with that money he supported his father and his mother, his wife and his children. Continually this went on, till one day a great saint called Narada was passing by; and the robber attacked him also. The

* A lecture reprinted from the 'Brahmavadin' May, 1902.

sage asked the robber: 'Why do you want to rob me; It is a great sin. You kill human beings and rob them. What do you do all this sin for?" The robber said: "Why, I want to support my people with this money." "Now", says the sage, "do you think that they take share of your sin also?" "Certainly they do." "Very good," says the sage, "Tie me up here; make me safe; go home and ask your people whether they would share your sin, as they share the money you make." And this man went to his father: "Father, do you know how I support you?" "No, I do not." "I am a robber; I have killed many persons and robbed a great many." "You; my son; get away! outcast!" He came to the mother: "Mother, do you know how I support you?" "No." "I am a robber." "How horrible!" said the mother. "But do you take part of my sin?" "Why should I? I never committed robbery", said the mother. Then he went to his wife: "Do you know how I maintain you all?" "No." "Why, I am a highway robber; I have been doing this for years, and that is how I am supporting and maintaining you all. And now, are you ready to share my sins?" "Certainly not; you are the husband; it is your duty to support me." The eyes of the robber opened: "That is the way of the world—even those, my relatives, for whom I have been robbing." His eyes opened. He came back where he had bound up the sage, took away his bonds and fell at the feet of the saint and said: "Save me! what should I do?" The sage says: "Give up thy life and give up all this delusion. See none of these love you: they will all come and share your prosperity, but the moment you are not prosperous they will be nowhere. None is there to share your evils; they will all share your good; and, therefore, worship Him who alone stands by us, whether we are

doing good or we are doing evil; never leaves us even; as love never pulls down; as love knows no barter, no selfishness." And the sage taught him how to worship. And then this man left everything; went into a forest; and there he went on praying and meditating till he forgot himself, until the ants came and built an ant-hill round about him and he did not know, was quite unconscious. And after years had passed, a voice came: "Arise, sage!" Sage, —"I am a robber." "No more robber. A purified sage art thou. Thy old name is gone. But now, since thy meditation was so deep and great that thou didst not remark even the ant-hills which surround you, henceforth thy name shall be Valmiki—one born in the ant-hill. So, he became first a sage.

As to how he became a poet:—One day, this sage Valmiki was going to bathe in the holy river Ganges, and there was a pair of doves wheeling round and round, kissing each other. And the sage looked up, and he was pleased; but in a second an arrow whisked past and killed the male dove; and as the male dove fell down on the ground the female dove went on whirling around the dead body of its companion; and the poet in a moment became miserable—looked round, and there he saw the hunter. "Thou wretch, without even the smallest mercy, thy slaying hand would not even stop for love!" 'What was this,' the poet thought. "What am I talking! I have never spoken in that sort of way." And then a voice came: "Be not afraid; this is poetry that is coming out of your tongue. Write in this sort of language the life of Rama." And that is how the first poem was begun. The first verse sprang out of pity, from the mouth of Valmiki, the first poet. And then he wrote the beautiful "Life of Rama."

There was an ancient Indian town; it exists even in

modern times called Ayodhya, locally called (Oude)—most of you have seen in the map of India—Oude. That was the ancient Ayodhya. And there, in ancient times reigned a king called Dasaratha; and he had three queens; but the king had not any children. And then the king and the queens, like good Hindus, they all prayed and fasted and made pilgrimages so that they might have children; and in good time four children were born. The eldest of them was Rama. Now, these four brothers were educated by priests as should be; and then, there was in ancient India a custom to avoid future quarrel whereby the king in his own life-time used to nominate the eldest son as a sort of sub-king, the Young-king, as he is called.

Now, there was another king, called Janaka, and this king had a beautiful daughter, called Sita. This Sita was born without parents. She was found in a field; she was a Daughter of Earth. The word "Sita" in ancient Sanskrit means the furrow—the furrow made by a plough. In the ancient mythology of India you will find persons born only of one parent, or persons born without parents; born of sacrificial fire, born in the field, dropped from the clouds, and so on. They all existed—all that sort of miraculous birth.

Sita was born without parents, pure and immaculate, She was the Daughter of the Earth. And this Sita was brought up by King Janaka. And when she grew up to be a young lady, he wanted to get her married.

There was another ancient Indian custom, what they call "Swayamvara". The princesses chose their husbands. They invited a number of princes from different parts of the country, and the princess went in the midst of them and selected the person she liked and then they were married.

There were numbers of princes who came for the

hand of Sita, but Sita selected Rama, the son of King Dasaratha. And they were married. Rama came home, and his old father thought that the time had come for him to appoint Rama as the Young-king, and himself retire. And everything was ready; the whole country began feasting and jubilating over the affair when the youngest queen, Kaikeyi, was reminded by one of her servants of two promises which the king had made to her. Sometime previous to that she had pleased the king very much and the king granted her two boons: "Ask any two things in my power, and I will grant you that," and she did not ask. So when the time had come—she had forgotten all about that; but there was a servant in her employ who began to work upon her jealousy, till she was almost mad with jealousy, and then the servant told her to ask from the king the two boons; one would be that her own son, Bharata should be on the throne; and next, that Rama should go to the forest, be exiled. Rama was the soul of the old king; but he was a King, and he could not go back on his word. He did not know what to do, and Rama came to the rescue, and he willingly offered to go into exile and give up the throne, so that his father might not be a liar; and for fourteen years he went into exile. And the Aryans did not know who inhabited these places. All the forest tribes of that day, they called monkeys and so on, if very ugly. And some that were called monkeys, if strong and powerful were called demons.

So, into this forest, inhabited by demons and monkeys, Rama must go. And Sita, she offered to accompany Rama. "How, you, a princess accompany me and bear these hardships; going into the forest, full of unknown dangers!" "Wherever Rama goes, there go I. What, do you talk of 'princess' and 'royal birth'? I go before

you!' So Sita went. And the youngest brother, he also went with Rama. They penetrated far into the forest, till they had reached the river Jumna. There they built little cottages; and Rama and Lakshmana used to hunt deer and collect fruits. And between them, the three lived for some time, till there came a demon giantess. She was the sister of the giant king of Ceylon; and roaming through the forests at will, she found that Rama was a very handsome man, and she fell in love at once with Rama. But Rama, he was the purest of men. He was a married man; of course he could not return back her love; and in vengeance, she went back to her brother the giant king and told him all about the beautiful Sita, the wife of Rama. But Rama was the most powerful of mortals; no power was there in gaints or demons or anybody to conquer him. So the giant king had to take to subterfuge. He got hold of another giant who was a magician and changed him into a beautiful golden deer, and the deer went on prancing round about the place where Rama lived, and Sita asked Rama to go and capture the deer for her; and Rama went into the forest to capture the deer, leaving Sita in charge of his youngest brother and then laid a circle of fire round the cottage. He said; "To-day I see something will befall Sita; and therefore Sita, I tell you don't you go outside of this magic circle. Some danger may befall if you do." In the meanwhile, Rama had pierced the magic deer with his arrow, and immediately the deer changed its form into a man, and died; and imitating the voice of Rama: "Oh Lakshmana, come to my help!" And Sita says "Lakshmana go out in the forest in help of Rama! "That is not Rama's voice." But poor Lakshmana had to go in search of Rama. And as soon as he went out, the giant king had taken the

form of a mendicant monk and stood at the gate and asked for alms. "Wait a bit," said Sita, "till my husband comes and I will give you plentiful alms". "I cannot wait, Madam; I am very hungry; give me anything you have." Well, Sita had a few fruits in the cottage which she brought out; but this mendicant monk said: "Come out a little distance; I cannot come nearer"; he was a holy person. So, Sita came out of the magic circle; and immediately, the giant's body came; and holding Sita in his arms, he called his magic chariot, and putting her in that, he fled with Sita, the weeping Sita. Nobody was there to help her. She took a few of her ornaments from her arms and began to scatter them down. She was taken to Lanka in the island of Ceylon. And because she would not even speak to this giant, she, chastity itself,—the giant wanted to punish her: kept her under a tree, day and night; she should live under a tree, or consent to be the wife of this giant king.

Rama and Lakshmana came back and Sita was not there! Their grief knew no bounds. They did not know what became of her. The two brothers went on, seeking for Sita. After long searching, they found a group of monkeys, and in the midst of those was Hanuman, the divine monkey. Have you heard of Hindus worshipping the monkey? You see, by the monkeys and demons they mean the aborigines of Southern India. So, Rama at last fell in with these monkeys: and they told him that they saw flying through the skies in a chariot a demon and that demon was carrying a most beautiful lady and that she was weeping, and that where they were she just dropped one of her ornaments, and here was the ornament. And Lakshmana took up the ornament, and said; "I do not know whose ornament is that"; and Rama took it up

and said; "Yes, it is Sita's." Poor Lakshmana! The wife of the elder brother to us is just like a mother. So much reverence he had that he never looked upon the arms and the neck of Sita. You see, it was an ornament which was round the neck of Sita and he had never seen Sita's neck, so he did not know what it was. *There* is a touch of the old Indian custom.

Then the monkeys told Rama who this demon king was and where he lived, and then they wanted to seek for him. Now, the monkey king and his brother, they were fighting for the kingdom. This brother was helped by Rama and he regained the kingdom from the other brother who had driven him away, and he in return promised to help Rama. And they went in search all around but could not find Sita. At last, Hanuman by one bound from the coast of India reached the island of Ceylon, and there went searching all over, and nowhere could he find Sita. You see, this giant king had conquered the gods and the men and the women and the whole world and he had collected all the beautiful women and put them into a harem. So, Hanuman went about saying "Here cannot be Sita. Sita would die rather than be in such a place" and went seeking somewhere else. And at last, he found Sita, pale and thin, like a bit of a moon that lies low at the foot of the horizon. Thus she was. She was under a tree. And this Hanuman, he took a little form and crawled up the tree, and there he was; and witnessed how the giantess came, and how they tried and how Sita would not even listen to the name of the giant king being uttered.

And this Hanuman presented himself before Sita, and told her that he was the messenger of Rama; that Rama was well, and that he had been sent to find where Sita was, and that as soon as Rama made it out, he would come with

an army and conquer the giant and recover Sita. And he offered Sita that if Sita wished it, he would take Sita on his shoulder and with one leap clear the ocean and go back to Rama. But Sita could not. She was chastity itself, she would never touch the body of another man except that of her husband. So there she remained. And Rama had sent her in token his signet ring; this Hanuman showed to Sita. And Sita gave a jewel from her hair. With that Hanuman returned. And then the army collected, and then they marched towards the southernmost point of India; and there they built a huge bridge, which still remains to-day, called Setu, which Rama's monkeys built.

And Rama was God incarnate; else, how could he do all these things. He was the incarnation of God, according to the Hindus. They believe him to be the fifth or sixth incarnation of God in India.

And now, these demons and monkeys, and all these, came; they uprooted whole hills and brought them down and put them into the water and covered them with stones and trees, and all, thus making the huge embankment. And a little squirrel came, and he rolled himself in the sand, ran back to the bridge and shook off the sand; and he ran again. He thus put in sand work for the bridge of Rama. The monkeys laughed. They were bringing whole mountains, whole forests, bringing huge loads of sands, and looking at the little squirrel rolling in the sand and shaking himself, they laughed. But Rama saw it, and said: "Blessed be the squirrel; he is doing his work and he is quite as great as the greatest one of you." And then he stroked the squirrel on the back. Those are the marks of Rama's finger you see on the running squirrel's back.

Now, when the bridge was built, the whole army of monkeys, led by Rama and his brother, entered Ceylon.

There was tremendous war and bloodshed for several months there. At last, this demon king was conquered; His capital was built entirely of gold, and the palaces, houses, and other buildings were all of gold, solid gold; everything was of gold; so much so that there are still far away villages in the interior of India where when I tell them that I have been (in many places) in Ceylon, they say: "The houses, these are all of gold, are they not? If you say they are not, they ask, "Why, the books say it was all built of gold." So, all the cities were built of gold; and all this fell into the hands of Rama; Rama gave them all over to the younger brother of the demon king, who was a good soul, and seated him upon the throne of his brother.

And Sita came back to him. But when Sita came back, then there ran a murmur among his people. "The test! the test!" they said. Sita must give the test that she was perfectly pure. "Pure?" "She is chastity itself," says Rama. "Never mind; we want the test"; and they laid up a huge sacrificial fire, and Sita plunged into the fire, and Rama lamented thinking Sita was lost: and at that moment, the god of Fire himself came with a throne upon his head, and upon the throne was Sita. Then rejoicing went all over the army, and Rama, his friends and allies and the whole army were all pleased.

And Rama returned back to his capital. He took the vows. In old times, the king had to take certain vows for the benefit of his people and had to bow to public opinion and this poor Rama was simply the slave of his people, as we will find later on.

So Rama regained his kingdom; Sita was there, and

a few years passed in happiness, when the people again began to murmur; "This Sita was outside of India; she was stolen away by a demon. We did not see the test of Sita. Sita must give another test or else she must be banished." And the people insisted that Sita must be banished, and Sita was banished. She was made to go and live in the forest with the same sage, a poet, and there Rama's two children were born, the twins. And the poet never told the twins who they were; and brought them up and he then composed the poem, set it to music and dramatised it. The drama was a very holy thing; in India, it is never looked down upon; drama and music are by themselves religion; any song, love songs or any song, never mind; if one's whole soul is in that song, he attains salvation, just by that; nothing else he has to do; if a man's whole soul is in that, his soul gets salvation. They say it leads to the same goal.

So, this Valmiki, he dramatised the life of Rama; and he taught his two children to act their parts, and so on.

And then there came a time when Rama was going to have a huge sacrifice the old kings use to perform. But no ceremony in India can be performed by an unmarried man, he must have a wife—the co-religionist. That is the translation of the Sanskrit word for wife. Hundreds of ceremonies the Hindu has to perform, and not one can be performed if he has not a wife. (You see the priests tie them up together and they go round temples and make very great pilgrimages tied together.)

And Rama was without wife; Sita had been banished. Then the people asked him to marry again; and for the first time in his life, Rama stood against the people.

He said, "This cannot be; this life is Sita's; and so they made a golden statue of Sita, in order that the

ceremony may be performed. And they arranged even a dramatic entertainment, a great festival; and this great sage poet, he came with his pupils. The stage was there; everything there; and Rama and his three brothers and all the nobles and the people of Oude were in the audience; and then the life of Rama was being enacted: his wars enacted, his wars in the South with the demon kings, and all that, till poor Rama, he was nearly maddened, and when the time came for Sita's exile, Rama did not know what to do. And then says the sage: "Don't be grieved for, I will show you Sita", and the real Sita was brought on to the stage, and Rama jumped on the stage and embraced his wife.

All of a sudden, the same murmur arose: "The test! the test!" Sita could bear it no longer. "Here is the test she says and fell down and died. Thus ended the life of Sita; and Rama, he also died, but he lived only a few days after Sita's death till he could bear it no longer. He gave his throne to his son, and himself plunged into the waters of the Sarayu, the mighty river that washes his capital and gave up his body and joined Sita in the other world.

This is the great ancient epic of India; and Rama and Sita, as you read in the book, they are the model ideals of India. Every child, especially girls, they worship Sita. The height of ambition of a woman is to be like Sita: the pure, the all-suffering! When you see these ideals, you can at once find out the real condition of life in India—Suffering. Sita stands, as it were, for the race. The West says: "Do. Show your power by doing. India: show your power by suffering." The West has solved the problem, how much a man can have. India is solving the problem, how little a man can have.

Two extremes. Sita is typical of India, the idealized India. And whether she ever lived or not, whether the story is true or not, it does not matter much. We know that the ideal is there. There is not another mythological story which has gone amongst the whole nation, entered into their very life, and tingles in every drop of blood of the race, as this ideal of Sita. Sita is the name in India for everything that is good, pure and holy; everything that in woman we call woman. " Sita. Be Sita !" If a priest has to bless a woman he says: " Be Sita "! and if he blesses a child, he says: " Be Sita !' We are children of Sita; and they are all struggling to be Sita,—the patient, all-suffering, ever-faithful, ever pure wife. Through all this suffering she had there was not one harsh word against Rama. She took it as her own duty, and performed her part of the duty. Think of the terrible injustice of her being exiled into the forest. But Sita knows no harshness. That is again, the Indian ideal. Says the ancient Buddha: " And when a man hurts you, if you turn back to hurt, that would not cure the first injury; it would only create in the world one more wickedness." Sita was a true Indian in that. Sita never returned injury. Who knows what is true: the apparent power and strength as held in the West, or the Eastern one of real suffering? The West says: "We minimise evil by conquering." India says: We destroy evil by suffering, till evil is nothing for us, it becomes positive enjoyment." Well, great ideals, both. Who knows which will survive in the long run? Who knows which attitude will really benefit? Disarm and conquer animality, suffering or doing? In the meantime, let us not try to destroy each other's ideals. We are both intent upon the same work: annihilation of evil. You take up your method; let them take up their method

Let us not destroy the ideal. I do not say to the West: "Take up our method." Certainly not. The goal is the same; but methods can never be the same.

And so, after hearing all this,—this mythology—the ideals of india, I hope you will say in the same breath to India: We know the goal, the ideal is all right for us both; you follow your own ideal; you follow your own method, in your own way: and God-speed to you; my message in life is to ask the East and the West not to quarrel but to say to each other: God-speed!

THE MAHABHARATA.*

THE other Epic about which I am going to speak to you is called "The Mahabharata." Mahabharata is the name of India—Great India. The region of the quarrel is not very big, but this epic has been the most popular one in India; and somehow or other it got an authority, as Homer's poem had for the Greeks. As ages went on, everybody put something into it till it has become a huge book of a hundred thousand verses. All sorts of philosphical treatises, little bits of history, and several other discussions have been added on from time to time till it is a vast, gigantic mass; but through all that runs the old, ancient epic, the original story.

The central story of the Mahabharata is a war, between two families of cousins, one, called the Kauravas the other, the Pandavas—for the Empire of India.

The Aryans came into India in small companies; gradually, these tribes began to extend and then, at last, they became the undisputed rulers of India; and then arose this fight between two branches of the same family to gain mastery. Those of you that have studied the Gita know how the book opens with a description of the battle-field; that it was ridged with two armies, arrayed one against the other to fight.

There were two brothers, descendants of the emperor: one was called Dhritarashtra, and the other was called Pandu. Dhritarashtra was born blind though the elder one; and according to Indian law, no blind, halt or

* A lecture reprinted from the 'Brahmavadin,' August, 1902.

maimed or consumptive, or any other constitutionally diseased persons can inherit; they can only get a maintenance allowance. And so this Dhritarashtra could not get the throne though he was the elder son, and Pandu became the emperor.

Dhritarashtra had a hundred sons and Pandu had five. Pandu died, and then there arose, after a while, jealousies and quarrels between the two factions. The children of Dhritarashtra somehow got hold of the kingdom, and they drove away the children of Pandu; and these five brothers fled to the forest with their mother Kunti. They lived in the forest and went about disguised; declared that they were priests, Brahmans; and lived as Brahman students by begging. And so they went on till they came to hear of the approaching marriage of a princess of a country called the *Panchala*.

I told you last night of a peculiar form of ancient Indian marriage. They always had a great feat of arms—some skill in archery or something of the kind; and then the hero would be selected by the princess. It was called *Swayamvara*, choosing of the husband by the princess.

This princess was famed far and wide for her beauty and accomplishments; and King Draupada was a great king, king of the Panchalas, and his daughter was going to choose a hero.

There was placed some mark in the form of a fish, away above; under that fish was a wheel with a hole in the centre, continually turing around, there was beneath a tub of water; and a man, looking at the reflection of the fish in the tub of water was asked to send an arrow and hit the eye of the fish through the wheel and he who succeeded would be married to the princess.

Now, there came kings and princes from different parts of India, and one after the other they tried, and every one failed. You know, there are four castes in India: the highest caste is the hereditary priest, the Brahman; next to him, the caste of Kshatriya, the kings and the fighters; next to them are traders or businessmen, and then, the servants. Now, this princess was, of course, one of the second caste, Kshatriya. But these kings and princes having failed, her brother stood up and said: "Any other caste, any man, who can hit the mark, him will Draupadi make her husband."

And there the five brothers were, of the Brahman caste apparently. The third brother was celebrated in archery, the hero of the whole army. Mind you, in those days, the poem says, it was not mere bows and arrows only; it was magic archery:—one man could fight millions of men and burn them at will; and if you send one arrow it will rain and thunder—you can make everything burn, and so on. It was all divine magic.

But one fact is most curious in both of these poems; in both of these poems, along with these magic arrows and other things, you see the cannon already in use; this that you call "cannon"—it is an old, old thing used by the Chinese and the Hindus. On the walls of the cities were hundreds of curious weapons, made of hollow iron tubes, which, with powder and ball, would send a ball that could kill hundreds of men.

It used to be said that the Chinese by magic put the devil inside of an iron hollow tube and when they applied a little fire to a hole, the devil came out with terrific noise and killed many people.

But they were fighting with magic arrows;—they had got arrangements—tactics, even in these old days: there

were the foot soldiers, termed the *pada*, then there was the cavalry, *Turaga* they were called; and there were two other divisions, which moderns have lost and given up. There were the elephant corps:—hundreds and hundreds of elephants, made into regiments, with men on their backs clad in huge sheets of iron mail, and these elephants would bear down upon a mass of the enemy. Then, there were chariots. Of course you have all seen pictures of chariots in old paintings because they are used in every country. These were the four divisions of the army in those old days.

But all these princes failed in hitting the mark. Then the son of the king Drupada rose up in the midst of the court and said that Kshatriyas, the king caste had failed; now it was open to the other castes. Be it a Brahman, even a *chandala*, whosoever hits the mark, he marries Draupadi.

And among the Brahmans was seated Arjuna, the third brother, the hero of the bow. He arose. Now Brahmans as a caste are very quiet and rather timid people. According to the law, they must not touch an instrument, they must not touch a sword, they must not go up a tree, must avoid dangerous situations. See, what quiet, peaceable people they are.

So, when the other Brahmans saw this man come up, they thought that that man was going to bring the wrath of the Kshatriyas upon them and that they would be all killed. They tried to dissuade him but he would not listen, because he was a soldier, all the same; and he took the bow and arrow in his hand, sent the arrow looking at the tub of water, right through the wheel and hit the fish-eye. There was great jubilation; and Draupadi, the princess—the princess must be there with the garland in her hand and she throws the garland on the head of the man who is

her choice—and she threw the garland over the head of Arjuna; he was chosen.

The other princes, they were very much disgusted that a priest should catch this beautiful princess, when these kings and princes had failed; so they wanted to fight Arjuna. There was a tremendous fight but they were all beaten. So they all went back to their homes.

And the five brothers with the princess, they returned to where they had left their poor mother in a cottage. Every day they used to go out to beg, as Brahmans, the priestly class, have to live by begging. So they used to go out and what they got by begging they brought and the mother divided it among them. Now, the brother of the princess had said: "Why, who are these people? Who is this man whom my sister is going to marry? They have not any chariots or horses or anything. Why, they go on foot." But he followed at a distance. And thus the five brothers, with the princess, came to the cottage where the mother lived; and Dharma says, "Mother, we have got most wonderful alms to-day"; and the mother says: "Divide it, my children"—and then the mother found out:—why, it was a bride! but see, whatever it be, the mother's word was there! It must not be wronged; must be fulfilled:—mother's words. And the five brothers married the same one.

Now, you know, in every society there are stages of development. Behind the epic here, there is a wonderful glimpse of more ancient historic times. The author of the poem mentions the fact; but he tries to gloss it over and find an excuse and a cause because it was a wonderful mother's word, mother's troth, and so on. Behind that—you know, in every nation, there has been a certain stage when polyandry prevailed, all the brothers of a family

marry one wife in common. It still exists in some parts of a district in southern India. Now that was evidently a glimpse of the polyandrous stage, behind.

So they were married; and the king, Draupada, had to reconcile himself to this polyandrous marriage. They declared that such a thing is custom among princes and these princes having been brought up there, it was allowable for them. Anyway, it was there.

And then, when the other party found that these had returned strong and heroic, they made peace with them, and gave them half of the kingdom at first; and then, the five brothers, they conquered the whole of India and the eldest, Yudhistthira, was declared Emperor of all India.

And then they held a *rajasuya* sacrifice, where all kings came and declared one king as their Emperor.

In that sacrifice kings had to do manual service. If he did not, he had to fight. So all these kings came and rendered homage to the eldest brother. And the cousins, who had been their torment, and their children, they also had to come and do the same service.

But there was the sowing of the future feud. They could not bear that, and they worked out a plan. This king, Yudhisthira, was challenged to play at dice. In ancient India, if a man of the military caste was challenged to fight, he must turn back and fight, even if his own father challenged him he must fight: and if he was challenged to play at dice, it was equally honorable to play and dishonorable not to accept the challenge. And this King, the epic says, Yudhisthira, who was an incarnation of all virtues, even he the great sage king had to accept the challenge. And the other party, they had made false dices. One after the other, everything went away, till he got from him his kingdom

and everything else; and the last stage was that they had to give up not only their throne, but go into exile. The five brothers of the Pandavas, they had to go. They went into exile, lived in the forest for ten or twelve years; lived by hunting. And then they talked with sages—and that part of the poem is very interesting—you see here there is scope to put in everything,—old beautiful stories of ancient India;—religious, philosophical, all these are put in there; how these five brothers invited the sages to tell them stories so as to make them bear lightly the burden of their exile. One I will tell you:—

There was a king called Asva-pati; the king had a beautiful daughter; and she was so good and beautiful that she was called Savitri—it is the name of a celebrated prayer of the Hindu,—good and pure as prayer. And Savitri, she grew older and the father asked her to choose a husband for herself. These ancient Indian princesses were very independent, you see. So, Savitri and her father went on a tour over India stopping at different courts seeing different princes. Not one of them could win the heart of Savitri.

Then they came to one of those forests in Ancient India—whole tracts of land reserved; they were for the protection of animals which were not allowed to be killed. The animals had lost the fear of man: the fish came and took food out of the hand; for thousauds of years nobody had killed any creature there; and there the sages and the broken-down, they returned there and lived with their animals, with the deer, and all animals and birds; even the criminals were safe there. When a man got tired of life, he used to go to the forest and there in the company of sages, talking of religion, meditating thereon, he passed his life. There was another king. He was defeated by his

enemies, who took away his kingdom and he was blind. So, the poor blind old king with his queen and his boy took refuge in the forest. This boy's name was Satyavan. It so happened that after having visited all these different courts they at last came to this hermitage or holy place. Not even the greatest king could pass that way without going there and paying his homage to the sages. But they were a peculiar people. Just as in Europe the greatest priest, the Pope of Rome, for instance, would be very glad to trace his descent from some robber baron—who was burned on a cliff on the banks of the Rhine—the greatest man would be glad to trace his descent from those barons, so the greatest Emperor of India, would only be too glad to trace his descent to some sage who lived in a forest, clad in rags, and lived on roots and fruits. We are all thus children of sages. So, that is the respect that is paid there to religion. And even kings, when they pass by these hermitages had to go in and pay their respects. If they were on horse-back, they had to descend and walk; if in a chariot, their armour and all had to be left outside. No fighting man could enter, unless he came in the dress of a priest, quiet and gentle.

So, this king and his daughter Savitri came, and there was Satyavan, the prince, and Savitri's heart was conquered. She had escaped all the princes and the palaces and the courts, but here in the forest refuge of King Asvapati, his son stole her heart.

Well, father and daughter came back. "Savitri," says the father, " did you see anybody whom you would like to marry." " Yes, father." " What prince ?" ' No prince ; but that son of the king who had lost his kingdom, the prince without a patrimony, who lives the life of the Brahmans, the monastic life, lives in the forest, collecting

roots and herbs, helping and feeding his old father and mother living in a cottage.

Then, the father consulted the court astrologers and they declared it was the most ill-omened choice that was ever made; and they said: "Within eighteen months from this time, this young man will die." Then the king says: "Savitri, this young man is going to die in eighteen months and you will have to become a widow, think of that." "Never mind, father, you don't ask me to be impure by marrying another person; I love that man."

Well, Savitri had to marry that young man. The father had to come down and Savitri quietly went from the palace into the forest, to live with her husband and help her husband's parents. And Savitri knew the exact date when this young man was to die and kept it hidden from her husband. And they both then went into the depth of the forest, collected fruits and flowers, gathered fagots, and they came back to the cottage, cooked their meals, and helped these old people. Thus went on their lives till the fatal day came; and that day Savitri would not allow him just to go even a foot without her; and then the young man says: "We must collect some fagots; and he climbed up a tree; and in a few minutes, he says: "My head is dizzy;" and he came down; and the wife says: "Come, lay your head on my lap," and he laid his head on the lap of his wife and expired. And there she sat and then came the emissaries of Death to take away the soul of Satyavan. But they could not approach within a mile of where Savitri sat with the dead body of her husband, his head in her lap; it was a zone of fire, and not one of the emissaries of Death could come within it; they all fled back. They told their king, the god of Death, that they couldn't get the soul of that man. Then came Yama

the god of Death, the Judge of the Dead;—he was the first man that died—the first man that died on earth—and he became the presiding deity over all those that die. He judges whether a man is to be punished or rewarded, after he is dead. And he came. Of course, he could come inside that circle; he was a god. And when he came to Savitri he said: "Daughter, give up this dead body and let the soul come out, for, know this is the fate of mortals and I am the first of those that died. Since then, every one has died; death is the fate of man." And Savitri walked off. And Yama got hold of the soul of the young man and proceeded, and before he had gone far, he heard foot-falls upon the dry leaves. He turned back and said, "Savitri, daughter, why are you following me? This is the fate of mortals." "Not following thee, father," says Savitri, "but this is also the fate of mortals: she follows where her love takes her." Then says the god of Death: "Ask a boon, except the life of your husband." "If thou art pleased, Oh Lord of Death, may my father-in-law be cured of his blindness and made happy." "Granted, go home, daughter." And then the King of Death went on with the soul of Satyavan and before he had gone far, again the same footfall upon the dry leaves. He turns: "Savitri, daughter, still following me?" "Yes, father, cannot help, I am trying all the time to go back but the body goes and the mind goes; the soul is already gone, for in that soul is also mine, and when you take the soul the body follows, does not it?" "Pleased am I, ask another boon, but it must not be the life of your husband." "Let my father-in-law regain his lost kingdom, father, if thou art pleased." "Granted. Go home." And then Yama goes as before. Savitri follows; Yama turns back: "Savitri, still following?" "Cannot help." "Now, suppose, Savitri, that

your husband is a sinner and he has to go to hell?" "Still goes Savitri with the one she loves?" "Are you ready for that, Savitri?" "I am." "Pleased am I, ask for another boon, but do not ask for the life of your husband." "Then, let the family of my father-in-law be not destroyed; let the dynasty of kings come to me." And then the god of Death smiled: "Daughter, you have got me now; here is the soul of your husband. Go back. Love has conquered death at last. Woman never loved like you and thou art the proof that even I, the god of Death, am powerless against the power of love." That is the story of Savitri. And unless a girl in India be like Savitri, she is not considered a wife in the proper sense of the word, and she is sure to be born again, it is believed. It is this tremendous love that snatched back from the jaws of death the soul of her husband.

Well, hundreds of beautiful episodes like this are in that chapter of the epic—but I began by telling you there were a hundred thousand verses. Now, after the Pandavas had lived that way in exile, they came back and demanded half of the kingdom from the cousins who had taken the whole. They would not yield that. Then they wanted only five villages: not even that was given. So, at last preparations were going on for a war; and it was a must curious war: the old Indian custom of the Kshatrias—one brother joined this side and the other that side; the father on one side, the son on the other; the man who was the first asked by a party, he was in honor bound to join the party and so they were on both sides fighting—but the most curious thing was that as soon as evening came they were good friends, going to each other's tents: when the morning came again, however, fighting each other. And that was the awful trait that the Hindus carried down to the

time of the Muhammedan invasion, and they went on doing the same thing with these Tartars, and the result was they were crushed out of existence. A man on horseback must not strike one on foot, must not poison the weapon, must not do this, must not do that, and as soon as the battle ceases, be friends, never take undue advantage. And so, the Hindus were trained in that way. And when came the foreign invasion from Central Asia, they treated the invader in the same way, six times defeated him and six times sent him back to his home with presents for his family &c. Their code lays down that you must not conquer anybody's country, and when a man is beaten you must send him back to his country. The Mahommedan invader treated the Hindu Rajah differently, and when he got him once, he killed him without remorse.

Now, the war went on. The greatest incident of the war was the marvellous poem of the Gita. I would advice you who have not read that poem of the Gita to read it. There are quite a number of translations. It is the popular scripture of India. At the same time, I wish you only knew how much it has influenced your own country. You all know about your own Emerson: if you want to know the source of Emerson's inspiration, that is this little book, the Gita. He went to see Carlyle, and Carlyle made to him a present of the book, and that little book is responsible for all that Concord movement which is still going on now. All the broad movements in America, at the same time, originated there, in that Concord party.

Now, the central figure of the Gita is Krishna, just as you worship Jesus of Nazareth as God come down as man, so the Hindus worship many prophets; they are not content with one or two. Each sect has one; and Krishna is one of them and Krishna perhaps has a larger number

wers in India than any other Incaranation of God. His followers hold that he was the most perfect of these prophets. Why? Because, they say, look at Buddha and look at the others: they were only monks, they had no sympathy for married people. How could they have; but look at Krishna: He was great as a son, as a king, as a father, and all through his life he had that marvellous carrying out of what he preached. His work was all incidental, all the time let the man be at rest, that was the idea. He says in the Gita—"He who in the midst of the greatest activity finds the sweetest peace and in the midst of the greatest calmness is most active, he has known the secret of life." And how he shows the way to do it by being non-attached: do everything but get not identified with anything; you are the soul, all the time separate; you are the witness. Do not stick to anything. Our misery comes not from work but by our getting attached to something. So, money, money is a great thing; 'earn it,' says Krishna, 'struggle hard to get money; but don't get attached to it; you are not money; money goes and comes—why love then a fleeting thing? So with children, so with wife, husband, fame, everything: don't get attached. There is only one attachment and that belongs to the Lord; to none other. But work for them, love them, do good to them, sacrifice a hundred lives for them, but be never attached. His own life was exactly that. His first great work was the fight treated of in the Mahabharata. Mind you, this book is several thousand years old and some parts of his life are very similar to that of Jesus of Nazareth; he was born of royal birth and how there was a tyrant king, called Kamsa, that there was a prophecy current that there will be born of such and such a family a prince who will be king. So, Kamsa ordered all the children to be massacred

and how the father and mother fled and he was born in a manger, and how the light suddenly shone in the prison, and how the child spoke and said I am the Light of the World, born for the good of the world. And there were other miraculous things and the father of the baby crossed the Jumna and left the baby with the shepherds. You find Krishna symbolically represented with a few sheep, the great shepherd as he is called, how the king ordered the murder of all the male children born and how Krishna came and how these things went on, how sages came and said that God himself was born—came to pay him homage. In other parts the similarity does not continue, but the beauty of it is he conquered this tyrant and never got the throne. When it came to being a king, he says, 'I have nothing to do with that, I have done my duty and there it rests."

And both parties come to him. He says, "I don't fight in this war;" and then he consented to be the charioteer of Arjuna and he drove to the battlefield the chariot of the great hero. And then the war lasted eighteen years. Very few were left. But in those days of hand to hand fight more men were killed than in these days of fire arms.

And then war was proclaimed against the king, the great Yudhisthira, the oldest of the five brothers, gentle, quiet, and the purest character on earth,—the man who had not an enemy, a beautiful character.

I remember a number of beautiful stories about him—How when they were in the forest, the five brothers and the queen were once travelling and became thirsty in the desert; and then, one after the other, the brothers all went in search of water and not one of them returned. Then the queen went. Even she did not return. At last, the exiled Emperor, weeping at the loss of his bro-

thers and the queen, went in search of them himself and he came to a beautiful lake of water, beautiful lotuses blooming on it, and as he was going to drink the water, a voice from the other side of the lake says "Stop" and he looks down and finds his brothers and his queen dead, the bodies floating on the surface of the lake. And he says 'Who are you?' 'Whosoever I be, answer first my questions and then drink the water.' 'Ask,' says the king. He says, 'I have several questions to ask. What is the most wonderful fact in this world?' 'We see every day men falling off all around us, but those that are left behind think that they will never die. This is the most curious fact in the face of death: none believes that he will die.' Another question was asked. 'What is the way of discovering the secret of religion.' "By argument nothing can be settled; the Scriptures, one part contradicts the other. Two sages who do not differ in their opinions are not to be called sages at all. The sign of the sage is to differ from somebody else. The secret of religion is therefore as it were buried deep in a pit." Then the voice says, "What are we to do then?" "Have you seen any great soul in your life? If you have, follow him. The way to follow is that walked by great souls. And the voice says "I am pleased. I am the god of Death. I came to test you. Now, your brothers are there, not one of them is dead; it is all my magic": and they all got out of the spell and came back.

So, that was the nature of the king. We find by his answer he was more of a philosopher, more of a Yogi than a king.

And after this war was finished he gained his empire; then came to him the news that Krishna died; his friend, his prophet, his sage, his counsellor, he died! And

then the king says "We shall become the Sanyasins." It was a custom for old kings to become Sanyasins. In old India when men became very old, they gave up everything. When a man did not want to live any more, then he went towards the Himalayas or somewhere else, without eating or drinking, walked on and on till the body failed: all the time thinking of God, he just marched on till the body gave way.

Then came the gods, the sages, and they told the king that he should go and reach heaven. To go to heaven one has to cross the highest peaks of the Himalayas. Beyond the Himalayas is mount Meru. On the top of Mount Meru is heaven. None ever went there in this body. There the gods reside and Yudhisthira was called upon by the gods to go. So, the five brothers and the queen, they made ready and they went on taking the garb of monks and they walked from mountain top to mountain top till they came to the eternal regions of snow; and there the queen was the first to fall. Yudhisthira, the king, was leading the way. A brother who was behind said, "Behold, oh king, the queen has fallen. The king shed a few drops of tears but did not look back. "We are going to meet Krishna," he says: no time to look back, march on." After a while, another brother says, "Behold Sahadeva has fallen. The king shed a few drops of tears: 'March on.' So, one after the other, in the cold and snow, they were all killed; and alone this emperor was marching. Looking behind, he saw a little dog was following him. And so, the dog and the emperor went on, through snow and ice, over hill and dale, climbing higher and higher, till they reached Mount Meru, till they began to hear the chimes of heaven, and heavenly flowers

were showered upon him by the gods. And then descended the chariot of the gods and he saw several divine forms and they asked him: "Ascend this chariot, greatest of mortals, thou that art alone given to enter heaven without changing the mortal body. And Yudisthira looks ahead and says to his dog. "Get into the chariot, child." The gods stand aghast: "What! dog! the defiled dog! the dog goes to heaven! Great king, what is this? Are you mad? You are the most virtuous of the human race; you go to heaven in your body!" "But he has been my companion through snow and ice. When all my brothers were dead, my queen dead, he alone was left me. How can I leave him?" "You have to. Who ever heard of such a nonsense as a dog going to heaven! He has to be left behind." "I do not go," says the king, "without the dog." "Then" says the god, "on one condition the dog goes to heaven." "Name that." "You have been the most virtuous of mortals, and he has been a dog killing animals; he is a sinful dog, hunting and taking other lives. You can exchange for him and go to hell yourself." "Accepted" says the king; "let the dog go to heaven." And at once the scene changed. The dog was no other than Yama. "Behold, oh king, man never was so unselfish as thee, willing to exchange heaven with a little dog, resigning all his virtues, and willing to go to hell for a dog."

——:o:——

SANNYAS: ITS IDEAL AND PRACTICE.*

THIS is not the time for a long lecture. But I shall speak to you in brief about a few things which I should like you to carry into practice. First, we have to understand the ideal, and then the methods by which we can make it practical. Those of you who are Sannyasins must try to do good to others, for Sannyas means that. There is no time to deliver a long discourse on 'Renunciation,' but I shall very briefly characterise it as "*the love of death.*" Worldly people love life. The Sannyasin is to love death. Are we to commit suicide then? Far from it. For suicides are not lovers of death, as it is often seen that when a man trying to commit suicide fails, he never attempts it for a second time. What is the love of death then? We must die, that is certain; let us die then for a good cause. Let all our actions—eating, drinking, and everything that we do—tend towards the sacrifice of our self. You nourish your body by eating. What good is there in doing that if you do not hold it as a sacrifice to the well-being of others? You nourish your minds by reading books. There is no good in doing that unless you hold it also as a sacrifice to the whole world. It is right for you that you should serve your millions of brothers rather than aggrandise this little self. Thus you must die a gradual death. In such a death is heaven, all good is stored therein—and in its opposite is all that is diabolical and evil.

---

* Reply given to a parting Address given to the Swamiji by the junior Sannyasins of the Math (Belur), on the eve of his leaving for the West for the second time (19th June, 1899).

Then as to the methods of carrying the ideals into practical life. First, we have to understand that we must not have any impossible ideal. An ideal which is too high makes a nation weak and degraded. This happened after the Buddhistic and the Jain reforms. On the other hand, too much practicality is also wrong. If you have not even a little imagination, if you have no ideal to guide you, you are simply a brute. So we must not lower our ideal, neither are we to lose sight of practicality. We must avoid the two extremes. In our country the old idea is, to sit in a cave and meditate and die. To go ahead of others in salvation is wrong. One must learn sooner or later, that one cannot get salvation if one does not try to seek the salvation of his brothers. You must combine in your life immense idealism with immense practicality. You must be prepared to go into deep meditation now, and the next moment you must be ready to go and cultivate these fields (Swamiji said, pointing to the meadows of the Math). You must be prepared to explain the difficult intricacies of the Shastras now, and the next moment to go and sell the produce of the fields in the market. You must be prepared for all menial services, not only here, but elsewhere also.

The next thing to remember is, that the aim of this Institution is to make men. You must not merely learn what the Rishis taught. Those Rishis are gone, and their opinions are also gone with them. You must be Rishis yourselves. You are also men as much as the greatest men that were ever born—even our Incarnations. What can mere book-learning do? What can meditation do even? What can the Mantras and Tantras do? You must stand on your own feet. You must have this new method—the method of man-making. The true *man* is he who is strong

as strength itself and yet possesses a woman's heart. You must feel for the millions of beings around you, and yet you must be strong and inflexible, and you must also possess obedience; though it may seem a little paradoxical —you must possess these apparently conflicting virtues. If your superior orders you to throw yourself into a river and catch a crocodile, you must first obey and then reason with him. Even if the order be wrong, first obey and then contradict it. The bane of sects, especially in Bengal, is that if any one happens to have a different opinion, he immediately starts a new sect, he has no patience to wait. So you must have a deep regard for your *Sangha*. There is no place for disobedience here. Crush it out without mercy. No disobedient members here; you must turn them out. There must not be any traitors in the camp. You must be as free as the air, and as obedient as this plant and the dog.

——:o:——

WHAT HAVE I LEARNT? *

At Dacca, the Swamiji delivered two lectures in English, the first one was on, "What have I learnt?" and the second one was on, "The religion we are born in." The following is translated from the report in Bengali by a disciple, and contains the substance of the first lecture:—

First of all, I must express my pleasure at the opportunity afforded me of coming to Eastern Bengal, to acquire an intimate knowledge of this part of the country, which I hitherto lacked, in spite of my wanderings through many civilised countries of the West; as well as my gratification at the sight of majestic rivers, wide fertile plains, and picturesque villages in this, my own country of Bengal, which I had not the good fortune of seeing for myself before. I did not know that there was everywhere in my country of Bengal—on land and water—so much beauty and charm. But this much has been my gain, that after seeing the various countries of the world I can now much more appreciate the beauties of my own land. In the same way also, in search of religion, I had travelled among various sects,—sects which had taken up the ideals of foreign nations as their own, and I had begged at the door of others, not knowing then that in the religion of my country, in our national religion, there was so much beauty and grandeur. It is now many years since I have found Hinduism to be the most perfectly satisfying religion in the world. Hence, I feel sad at heart when I see exist-

* A lecture delivered at Dacca, March, 1901.

ing among my own countrymen, professing a peerless faith such a widespread indifference to our religion,—though I am very well aware of the unfavourable materialistic conditions in which they pass their lives, owing to the diffusion of European modes of thought in this our great motherland.

There are among us at the present day, certain reformers who want to reform our religion, or rather turn it topsy-turvy, with a view to the regeneration of the Hindu nation. There are no doubt, some thoughtful people among them, but there are also many who follow others blindly and act most foolishly, not knowing what they are about. This class of reformers are very enthusiastic in introducing foreign ideas into our religion. They have taken hold of the word 'idolatry,' and aver that Hinduism is not true, because it is idolatrous. They never seek to find out what this so-called 'idolatry' is, whether it is good or bad; only taking their clue from this word they are bold enough to shout down Hinduism as untrue. There is another class of men among us who are intent upon making out some slippery scientific explanations of any and every Hindu custom, rite, &c., and who are always talking of electricity, magnetism, air, vibration and all that sort of thing. Who knows, but they will perhaps some day define God Himself as nothing but a mass of electric vibrations! However, Mother bless them all! She it is who is having Her work done in various ways through multifarious natures and tendencies.

In contradistinction to these, there is that ancient class, who say,—"I do not know, I do not care to know or understand all these your hair-splitting ratiocinations; I want God, I want the Atman, I want to go to that Beyond, where there is no universe, where there is no pleasure or

pain, where dwells the Bliss Supreme"; who say, "I believe in salvation by bathing in the holy Ganges with faith";—who say, "Whomsoever you may worship with singleness of faith and devotion as the one god of the universe, in whatsoever form as Shiva, Rama, Vishnu, &c., you will get *Moksha*";—'to that sturdy ancient class I am proud to belong. Then here is a sect who advise us to follow God and the world together. They are not sincere, they do not express what they feel in their hearts. What is the teaching of the great Ones?—"Where there is Rama, there is no *Kama*; where there is *Kama*, there Rama is not. Night and day can never exist together." The voice of the ancient sages proclaim to us that, "If you desire to attain God, you will have to renounce '*Kama-Kanchana*' (lust and possession). This Samsára is unreal, hollow, void of substance. Unless you give it up; you can never reach God, try however you may. If you cannot do that, own that you are weak, but by no means lower the ideal. Do not cover the corrupting corpse with leaves of Gold!" So according to them, if you want to gain spirituality, to attain God, the first thing that you have to do is to give up this playing 'hide-and-seek' with your ideas, this dishonesty, this 'theft within the chamber of thought.'

What have I learnt? What have I learnt from this ancient sect? I have learnt,—

"Verily, these three are rare to obtain, and come only through the grace of God—human birth, desire to obtain Mokhsha, and the company of the great-souled ones." The first thing needed is *Manushyatvam*, human birth, because it only is favourable to the attainment of Mukti. The next is *Mumukshatvam*. Though our means of realisation vary according to the difference in sects and individuals,—though different individuals can lay claims to their special

rights and means to gain knowledge, which vary according to their different stations in life,—yet it can be said in general without fear of contradiction, that without this *Mumukshala*, realisation of God is impossible. What is *Mumukshatvam*? It is the strong desire for Moksha—earnest yearning to get out of the sphere of pain and pleasure—utter disgust for the world. When that intense burning desire to see God comes, then you should know that you are entitled to the realisation of the Supreme.

Then another thing is necessary, and that is, the coming in direct contact with the Mahapurushas, and thus moulding our lives according to those of the great-souled ones who have reached the Goal. Even disgust with the world and a burning desire for God are not sufficient. Initiation by the Guru is necessary. Why? Because it is the bringing of yourself into connection with that great source of power, which has been handed down through generations, from one Guru to another, in uninterrupted succession. The devotee must seek and accept the Guru or spiritual preceptor, as his counseller, philosopher, friend and guide. In short, the Guru is the *sine qua non* of progress in the path of spirituality. Whom then shall I accept as my Guru?—"He who is versed in the Vedas, without taint, unhurt by desire, he who is best of the knowers of Brahman." *Shrotriya*—he who is not only learned in the Shastras, but who knows their subtle secrets, who has realised their true import in their lives. "Reading merely the various scriptures they have become only parrots, and not Pandits. He indeed has become a Pandit who has gained Prema (Divine Love) by reading even one word of the Shastras." Mere book-learned Pandits are of no avail. Now-a-days, everyone wants to be a Guru; even a poor beggar wants to make a gift of a

lac of Rupees! Then, the Guru must be without a touch of taint; and he must be *Akamahata*—unhurt by any desire,—he has no other motive except that of purely doing good to others, he who is the ocean of mercy without reason, he who does not impart religious teaching with a view to gain name or fame, or anything pertaining to selfish interest. And he must be the intense knower of Brahman, that is, one who has realised Brahman, even as tangibly as an Amlaki-fruit in the palm of the hand. Such is the Guru, says the Sruti. When spiritual union is established with such a Guru, then comes realisation of God—then God-vision becomes easy of attainment.

After initiation, there should be in the aspirant after Truth *abhyás*, or earnest and repeated attempt at practical application of the Truth by prescribed means of constant meditation upon the chosen Ideal. Even if you have a burning thirst for God, or have gained the Guru, unless you have along with it the *abhyâsa*, unless you practise what you have been taught, you cannot get realisation. When all these are firmly established in you, then you will reach the Goal.

Therefore I say unto you, as Hindus, as descendants of the glorious Aryas,—Do not forget the great ideal of our religion—the great ideal of the Hindu,—which is, to go beyond this Samsára—not only to renounce the world, but to give up heaven too; aye, not only to give up evil, but to give up good too; and thus to go beyond this phenomenal existence, and ultimately realise the "Sat-Chit-Anandam Brahman"—the Absolute Existence-Knowledge-Bliss, which is Brahman.

———:o:———

THE RELIGION WE ARE BORN IN.*

IN the remote past, our country made gigantic advances in spiritual ideas. Let us, to-day, bring before our mind's eye that ancient history. But the one great danger in meditating over long-past greatness is, that we cease to exert ourselves for new things, and content ourselves with vegetating upon that by-gone ancestral glory, and priding ourselves upon it. We should guard against that. In ancient times there were, no doubt, many Rishis and Maharishis, who came face to face with Truth. But if this recalling of our ancient greatness is to be of real benefit, we too, must become Rishis like them. Aye, not only that, but it is my firm conviction that we shall be even greater Rishis than any that our history presents to us. In the past, signal were our attainments,—I glory in them and I feel proud in thinking of them. I am not even in despair at seeing the present degradation, and I am full of hope in picturing to my mind of what is to come in the future. Why? Because, I know the seed undergoes a complete transformation, aye, the seed as seed is seemingly destroyed, before it develops into a tree. In the same way, in the midst of our present degradation lies, only dormant for a time, the potential potency of the future greatness of our religion, ready to spring up again, perhaps more mighty and glorious than ever before.

Now let us consider what are the common grounds of agreement in the religion we are born in. At first

* **From a translation of a lecture delivered at Dacca, on the 31st March, 1901.**

sight we undeniably find various differences among our sects. Some are Advaitists, some are Visishtadvaitists, and others are Dvaitists. Some believe in Incarnations of God, some in Image-worship, while others are upholders of the doctrine of the Formless. Then as to customs also, various differences are known to exist. The Jats are not outcasted, even if they marry among the Mahommedans and Christians. They can enter into any Hindu temple without hindrance. In many villages in the Punjab, one who does not eat swine will hardly be considered a Hindu. In Nepal, a Brâhman can marry in the four *Varnas*; while in Bengal, a Brâhman cannot marry even among the sub-divisions of his own caste. So on and so forth. But in the midst of all these differences we note one point of unity among all Hindus, and it is this, that no Hindu eats beef. In the same way, there is a great common ground of unity underlying the various forms and sects of our religion.

First, in discussing the Scriptures, one fact stands out prominently,—that only those religions which had one or many Scriptures of their own as their basis, advanced by leaps and bounds, and survive to the present day notwithstanding all the persecution and repression hurled against them. The Greek religion, with all its beauty, died out in the absence of any Scripture to support it; but the religion of the Jews stands undiminished in its power, being based upon the authority of the Old Testament. The same is the case with the Hindu religion, with its Scripture the Vedas, the oldest in the world. The Vedas are divided into the Karma-kanda and the Jnana-kanda. Whether for good or for evil, the Karma-kanda has fallen into disuse in India, though there are some Bráhmans in the Deccan, who still perform *Yajnas* now and then with

the sacrifice of goats; and also we find here and there, traces of the Vedic Kriya-kanda in the Mantras used in connection with our marriage and Shraddha ceremonies, &c. But there is no chance of its being rehabilitated on its original footing. Kumarilla Bhatta once tried to do so but he was not successful in his attempt.

The Jnana-kanda of the Vedas comprises the Upanishads and is known by the name of Vedanta, the pinnacle of the Srutis, as it is called. Wherever you find the Acharyas quoting a passage from the Srutis, it is invariably from the Upanishads. The Vedanta is now the religion of the Hindus. If any sect in India wants to have its ideas established with a firm hold on the people, it must base them on the authority of the Vedanta. They all have to do it, whether they are Dvaitists or Advaitists. Even the Vaishnavas have to go to the Gopalatapani Upanishad to prove the truth of their own theories. If a new sect does not find anything in the Srutis in confirmation of its own ideas, it will go even to the length of manufacturing a new Upanishad, and make it pass current as one of the old original productions. There have been many such in the past.

Now as to the Vedas, the Hindus believe that they are not mere books composed by men in some remote age. They hold them to be an accumulated mass of endless Divine Wisdom, which are sometimes manifested or at other times remain unmanifested. The Sâyanâcharya says somewhere in his works,—"Who created the whole universe out of the knowledge of the Vedas." No one has ever seen the compiler of the Vedas, and it is impossible to imagine one. The Rishis were only the discoverers of the Mantras or Eternal Laws; they merely came face to

face with the Vedas, the Infinite mine of knowledge, which has been there from time without beginning.

Who are these Rishis? Vâtsâyana says,—"He who has attained through proper means the direct realisation of Dharma, he alone can be a Rishi, even if he is a *Mlechcha* by birth." Thus it is that in ancient times, Vashishtha born of an illegitimate union, Vyâsa the son of a fisherman, Nârada the son of a maid-servant with uncertain parentage, and many others of like nature, attained to Rishihood. Truly speaking, it comes to this then, that no distinction should be made with one who has realised the Truth. If the persons just named all became Rishis, then, O ye Kulin Brahmans of the present day, how much greater Rishis you can become! Strive after that Rishihood, stop not till you have attained the goal, and the whole world will of itself bow at your feet! Be a Rishi,—that is the secret of power.

This Veda is our only authority, and everyone has the right to it. Can you show any authority from this Veda of ours, that everyone has not the right to it? The Puranas, no doubt, say that a certain caste has the right to such and such a recension of the Vedas, or a certain caste has no right to study them or that this portion of the Vedas is for the *Satya Yuga*, and that portion is for the *Kali Yuga*. But, mark you, the Veda does not say so; it is only your Puranas that do so. But can the servant dictate to the master? The Smritis, Puranas, Tantras—all these are acceptable only so far as they agree with the Vedas; and wherever they are contradictory, they are to be rejected as unreliable. But now-a-days we have put the Puranas on even a higher pedestal than the Vedas! The study of the Vedas has almost disappeared from Bengal. How I wish that day will soon

come, when in every home the Veda will be worshipped together with the Salagrama, the household Deity, when the young, the old, and the women will inaugurate the worship of the Vedas.

I have no faith in the theories advanced by Western Savants with regard to the Vedas. They are to-day fixing the antiquity of the Vedas at a certain period, and again to-morrow upsetting it and bringing it one thousand years forward, and so on. However, about the Puranas, I have told you that they are authoritative only in so far as they agree with the Vedas, otherwise not. In the Puranas we find many things which do not agree with the Vedas. As for instance, it is written in the Puranas that some one lived ten thousand years, another one, twenty thousand years, but in the Vedas we find :—"Man lives, indeed, a hundred years." Which are we to accept in this case? Certainly the Vedas. Notwithstanding statements like these, I do not depreciate the Puranas. They contain many beautiful and illuminating teachings and words of wisdom on Yoga, Bhakti, Jnana, and Karma; those of course, we should accept. Then there are the Tantras. The real meaning of the word Tantra is Shástra, as for example, Kápila Tantra. But the word Tantra is generally used in a limited sense. Under the sway of kings who took up Buddhism and preached broadcast the doctrine of *Ahimsâ*, the performances of the Vedic *Yâga Yajnas* became a thing of the past, and no one could kill any animal in sacrifice, for fear of the king. But subsequently amongst the Buddhists themselves—who were converts from Hinduism—the best parts of these *Yâga Yajnas* were taken up, and practised in secret. From these sprung up the Tantras. Barring some of the abominable things in the Tantras, such as the *Vâmâchra* &c., the

Tantras are not so bad, as people are inclined to think. There are many high and sublime Vedantic thoughts in them. In fact, the Brahmana portions of the Vedas were modified a little, and incorporated into the body of the Tantras. All the forms of our worship and the ceremonials of the present day, comprising the Karma-kanda, are observed in accordance with the Tantras.

Now let us discuss the principles of our religion a little. Notwithstanding the differences and controversies existing among our various sects, there are in them too, several grounds of unity. First, almost all of them admit the existence of three things—three entities—Ishvara, Atman, and the Jagat. Ishvara is He who is eternally creating, preserving and destroying the whole universe. Excepting the Sankhyas all the others believe in this. Then the doctrine of the Atman, or the re-incarnation of the soul; it maintains that innumerable individual souls having taken body after body again and again, go round and round in the wheel of birth and death according to their respective Karmas; this is *Samsaravada* or, as is commonly called, the doctrine of re-birth. Then there is this Jagat or universe, without beginning and without end. Though some hold these three as different phases of one only, and some others as three distinctly different entities, and others again in various other ways, yet they are all unanimous in believing in these three.

Here I should ask you to remember that Hindus, from time immemorial, knew the Atman as separate from Manas, mind. But the Occidentals could never soar beyond the mind. The West knows the universe to be full of happiness, and as such, it is to them a place where they can enjoy the most; but the East is born with the conviction that this Samsara, this ever-changing existence

is full of misery, and as such, it is nothing, nothing but unreal, not worth bartering the soul for its ephemeral joys and possessions. For this very reason, the West is ever especially adroit in organised action, and so also, the East is ever bold in search of the mysteries of the internal world.

Let us, however, turn now to one or two other aspects of Hinduism. There is the doctrine of the Incarnations of God. In the Vedas we find mention of *Matsya Avatara* the Fish Incarnation, only. Whether all believe in this doctrine or not is not the point; the real meaning, however, of this *Avataravada* is the worship of Man,—to see God in man is the real God-vision. The Hindu does not go through Nature to Nature's God,—he goes to the God of man through Man.

Then there is Image-worship. Except the Five Devatas who are to be worshipped in every auspicious Karma as enjoined in our Shâstras, all the other Devatâs are merly the name of certain states held by them. But again, these five Devatâs are nothing but the different names of the one God only. This external worship of images has, however, been described in all our Shâstras as the lowest of all the low forms of worship. But that does not mean that it is a wrong thing to do. Despite the many iniquities that have found entrance into the practices of image-worship as it is in vogue now, I do not condemn it. Aye, where would I have been if I had not been blessed with the dust of the holy feet of that orthodox, image-worshipping Brâhman!

Those reformers who preach against image-worship, or what they denounce as idolatry,—to them I say,—Brothers! If you are fit to worship God-without-Form discarding any external help, do so, but why do you condemn others who cannot do the same? A beautiful large edifice, the glorious

relic of a hoary antiquity has, out of neglect or disuse, fallen into a dilapidated condition; accumulations of dirt and dust may be lying everywhere within it; may be, some portions are tumbling down to the ground. What will you do to it? Will you take in hand the necessary cleansing and repairs and thus restore the old, or will you pull the whole edifice down to the ground and seek to build another in its place, after a sordid modern plan whose permanence has yet to be established? We have to reform it, which truly means to make ready or perfect by necessary cleansing and repairs, not by demolishing the whole thing. There the function of reform ends. When the work of renovating the old is finished, what further necessity does it serve? Do that if you can, if not, hands off!" The band of reformers in our country want, on the contrary, to build up a separate sect of their own. They have, however, done good work; may the blessings of God be showered on their heads! But why should you Hindus, want to separate yourselves from the great common fold? Why should you feel ashamed to take the name of Hindu, which is your greatest and most glorious possession? This nationalship of ours, ye children of the Immortals, my countrymen, has been plying for ages, carrying civilisation and enriching the whole world with its inestimable treasures. For scores of shining centuries this national ship of ours has been ferrying across the ocean of life, and has taken millions of souls to the other shore, beyond all misery. But to-day it may have sprung a leak and got damaged through your own fault or whatever cause it matters not. What would you, who have placed yourselves in it, do now? Would you go about cursing it and quarrelling among yourselves, or would you not all unite together and put your best efforts to stop the holes? Let

us all gladly give our hearts' blood to do it ; and if we fail in the attempt, let us all sink and die together, with blessings and not curses on our lips.

And to the Brahmans I say,—" Vain is your pride of superiority of birth and ancestry. Shake it off. Brahmanhood, according to your Shastras, you have no more now, because, you have for so long lived under *Mlechcha* kings. If you at all believe in the words of your own ancestors, then go this very moment and make expiation by entering into the slow fire kindled by *Tusha* husks, like that old Kumarilla Bhatta, who with the purpose of killing the Buddhists first became a disciple of the Buddhists and then killed them, and subsequently entered the *Tushanala* to expiate his sins. If you are not bold enough to do that, then admit your weakness and stretch forth a helping hand and open the gates of knowledge to one and all, and give the down-trodden masses once more their just and legitimate rights and privileges."

——:o:——

THE TRUE METHOD OF SOCIAL REFORM.*

—— :o: ——

TO the reformers I will point out, I am a greater reformer than any one of them. They want to reform only little bits. I want root and branch reform. Where we differ is exactly in the method. Theirs is the method of destruction, mine is that of construction. I do not believe in reform; I belive in growth. I do not dare to put myself in the position of God and dictate unto our society 'This way you shall move and not that way.' I simply want to do my humble work, like the squirrel in the case of the building of Rama's bridge which was quite content to put on the bridge his little quota of sand dust. This is my position. This wonderful national machine has worked through ages; this wonderful river of national life is flowing before us. Who knows and dares say whether it is good, and how it shall move? Thousands of circumstances are crowding around it, giving it a special impulse, making it dull at times, and quicker at others. Who dares command its motion? Ours is only to work, as the Gita says, and stand by contented. Feed it with the fuel it wants, but the growth is its own; none can dictate its growth to it. Evils there are plentiful in our society. So are there evils in every other society, too. Here the earth is soaked sometimes with widows' tears; there, in the West, the air is poisoned with the breath of the sobs of the unmarried. Here poverty is the great bane of life; there the life-weariness

* From the lecture on "My Plan of Campaign" delivered in Madras.

of luxury is the great bane that is upon the race. Here men want to commit suicide because they have nothing to eat. There they commit suicide because they have so much to eat. Evil is everywhere, like rheumatism. Drive it from the foot, it goes to the head—drive it from there, it goes somewhere else. It is a question of chasing it from place to place; that is all. Aye, children, to remedy evil is the true way. Our philosophy teaches that evil and good are eternally conjoined, the obverse and the reverse of the same metal. Have one, you have to get the other; make one billow in the ocean, it must be at the cost of some hollow somewhere. Nay, all life is evil. No breath can be breathed without killing some one else; not a morsel of food can be eaten without depriving somebody of it. This is the law. This is philosophy. Therefore, the only thing we can do is to understand that all this work against evil is more subjective than objective. The work against evil is more educational than actual, however big men may talk. Aye, this is the first of all the idea to be realised with respect to work against evil, and this ought to make us calmer, this ought to take fanaticism out of our blood; and then the history of the world teaches us that wherever there have been fanatical reforms the only result was that they defeated their own ends. No greater upheaval for the establishment of right and liberty can be imagined than the war for the abolition of slavery in America. You all know about it. And what has been its result? The slaves are a hundred times worse to-day than they were before the abolition. Before the abolition these poor negroes were the property of somebody, and, as properties, they had to be looked after so that they might not deteriorate. To-day they are the property of nobody. Their lives are of no value; they are burnt alive on mere pre-

tences. They are shot down; no law for their murderers; for they are niggers, they are not human beings, they are not even animals, and that is the effect of such a violent taking away of evil by law or by fanaticism. Such is the testimony of history against every fanatical movement, even for doing good. I have seen that. My own experience has taught me that. Therefore, I cannot join any one of these condemning societies. Why condemn? There are evils in every society; everybody knows it; every child of to-day knows it; he can stand upon a platform and give us a haranague on the evils in Hindu society. Every uneducated foreigner who comes in globetrotting, takes a vanishing railway view of India, and lectures most learnedly on the awful evils in India. We admit it. Everybody can show what evil is, but he is the friend of mankind who finds a way out of the difficulty. Like the drowning boy who cried to the philosopher, when the philosopher was lecturing him—"Take me out of the water first," so our people cry, "We have had lectures enough, societies enough, papers enough, where is the man who lends us a hand to drag us out? Where is the man who loves us really? Where is the man that has sympathy with us?" Aye, that man is wanted. That is where I differ entirely from these reform movements. A hundred years they have been here. What good has been done excepting the creation of a most vituperative, a most condemnatory literature? Would to God it was not there! They have criticised, condemned, abused the orthodox until the orthodox have caught their tone, and paid them in their own coin, and the result is the creation of a literature in every vernacular which is the shame of the race, the shame of the country. Is this reform? Is this leading the nation to glory? Whose fault is this?

There is, then, another great consideration. Here, in India, we have always been governed by kings; kings have made all our laws; now the kings are gone and there is none left to take their place. The Government dares not; it has to fashion its ways according to the growth of public opinion. It takes time, quite a long time, to make a healthy, strong, public opinion which will solve its own problems, and in the interim we shall have to wait. The whole problem of social reform, therefore, resolves itself into this: where are those who want reform? Make them first. Where are the people? The tyranny of the minority is the worst tyranny that the world ever sees. A few men who think that certain things are evil will not make a nation move. Why does not the nation move? First educate the nation, create your legislative body, and then the law will be forthcoming. First create the power, the sanction from which the law will spring. The kings are gone; where is the new sanction, the new power of the people? Bring it up. Therefore, even for social reform, the first duty is to educate the people, and you have to wait till that time comes. Most of the reforms that have been agitated for during the last century have been ornamental. Every one of these reforms only touches the first two castes, and no other. The question of widow marriage would not touch seventy per cent. of the Indian women, and all such questions only reach the higher classes of Indian people who are educated, mark you, at the expense of the masses. Every effort of these classes has been spent in cleaning their own houses, making themselves nice and looking pretty before foreigners. That is no reformation. You must go down to the basis of the thing, to the very roots. That is what I call radical reformation. Put the fire there and let it burn upwards and make an Indian

nation. And the problem is not so easy. It is a big and a vast problem before us. Be not in a hurry, and, mark my words, this problem has been known these several hundred years.

To-day it is the fashion to talk of Buddhism, and Buddhistic agnosticism, especially in the South. Little do they dream that this degradation which we have in our hands to-day has been left by Buddhism. This is the legacy which Buddhism left in our hands. You read in books written by men who had never studied the rise and fall of Buddhism that the spread of Buddhism was owing to the wonderful ethics and the wonderful personality of Gautama Buddha. I have every respect and veneration for Lord Buddha, but mark my words, the spread of Buddhism was less owing to the doctrines, less owing to the personality of the great preacher and more owing to the temples that were built, the idols that were erected and the gorgeous ceremonies that were put before the nation. Thus Buddhism progressed. The little fire-place in the houses in which were poured the libations was not strong enough to hold its own against these gorgeous temples and ceremonies, and later on the whole thing degenerated. It became a mass of filth of which I cannot speak before this audience, but those who want to know it may look into those big temples, full of sculptures, in Southern India, and this is all the inheritance we have from the Buddhists. Then arose the great reformer, Sankaracharya and his followers, and all these hundreds of years, since his rising to the present day, has been the slow bringing back of the Indian masses to the pristine purity of the Vedantic religion. These reformers knew well the evils which existed, yet they did not condemn. They did not say, 'All that you have is wrong, and you must throw it out.' It could never be so.

To-day I read that my friend, Dr. Barrows, says that in 300 years Christianity overthrew the Roman and Greek religious influences. That is not the word of a man who has seen Europe, and Greece, and Rome. The influence of Roman and Greek religions is all there, even in Protestant countries, only with changed names, old gods coming in a new fashion. They change their names; the goddesses become Marys and the gods become saints, and the ceremonials become new; even the old title of Pontifex Maximus is there. So these wholesale changes cannot be. They are not so easy, and Sankaracharya knew it. So did Ramanuja. These changes cannot be. The only other way left to them was slowly to bring up the masses to the highest ideal of the existing religion. If they had sought to apply the other method they would have been hypocrites, for the very fundamental doctrine of their religion is evolution, the soul going up towards the highest goal, through all these various stages and phases, and all these stages and phases, therefore, are necessary and helpful, and who dares condemn them?

It has become a trite saying, and every man swallows it at the present time without questioning, that idolatry is wrong. Aye, I once thought so, and for the penalty of that I had to learn my lesson sitting at the feet of a man who got his everything from idols; I allude to Ramakrishna Paramahamsa. Hindus, if such Ramakrishna Paramahamsas are produced by idol worship, what will you have—the reformer's creed or any number of idols? I want an answer. Take a thousand idols more if you can. Produce Ramakrishna Paramahamsas through idol worship. God speed you! Produce such noble creatures by any means you have. And idolatry is condemned. Why? Nobody knows, except that some hundreds of years ago some man

of Jewish blood happened to condemn it, that is, he happened to condemn everybody else's idols except his own. If God is represented in any beautiful form, or any symbolic form, said the Jew, it was awfully bad; it was sin. But if He was represented in the form of a chest, with two angels sitting on each side, and a cloud hanging over it, it was the Holy of Holies. If God comes in the form of a dove, it is the Holy of Holies, but if He comes in the form of a cow it is heathen superstition; condemn it. That is how the world goes. That is why the poet says, "What fools we mortals are!" That is why it is difficult to look through each other's eyes, and that is the bane of humanity. That is the basis of hatred and jealousy, of quarrel and of fight.

Boys, moustached babies, who never went out of Madras, standing up and wanting to dictate laws to three hundred millions of people with thousands of traditions at their back! Are you not ashamed? Stand back from such blasphemy and learn first your lessons! Irreverent boys, simply because you can scrawl a few lines upon a paper and get some fool to publish it for you, you think you are the educators of the world, you think you are the public opinion of India! Is it so? Therefore, this I have to tell to the social reformers of Madras, that I have the greatest respect and love for them. I love them for their great hearts and their love for their country, for the poor, for the oppressed. But what I would tell them with a brother's love is that their method is not right. It has been tried these hundred years and has failed. Let us try some new method, and that is all. Did India want reformers ever? Do you read the history of India? Who was Ramanuja? Who was Sankara? Who was Nanak? Who was Chitanya? Who was Kabir? Who

was Dadu? Who were all these great preachers, one following the other, a galaxy of stars of the first magnitude? Did not Ramanuja feel for the lower classes? Did not he try all his life to admit even the Pariah to his community? Did he not try to admit even Mahomedans to his own fold? Did not Nanak confer with Hindus and Mahomedans, and try to bring about a new stage of things? They all tried, and their work is going on. The difference is this. They had not the fanfaronade of the reformers of to-day; they had not the curses on their lips the modern reformers have. Their lips pronounced only blessings. They never condemned. They said unto the people that the race must always grow. They looked back and they said, "O Hindus, what you have done is good, but my brothers let us do better." They did not say, "You have been wicked, now let us be good." They said, "You have been good, but let us now be better." That makes a whole world of difference. We must grow according to our natural growth. Vain it is to attempt the lines of action foreign societies have engrafted upon us. Impossible it is. Glory unto God that it is impossible, that we cannot be twisted and tortured into the shape of other nations. I do not condemn the institutions of other races; they are good for them, but not for us. What is meat for them may be poison for us. This is the first lesson to learn. With other sciences, other institutions and other traditions behind them, they have got their present systems. We with our traditions, with thousands of years of karma behind us, naturally, we can only follow our own bent, run in our own grooves, and that we shall have to do.

---:0:---

THE REFORM OF CASTE.*

—— :o: ——

THE solution of the caste problem in India assumes this form, not to degrade the higher castes, not to out-crush the Brahman. The Brahminhood, mind, is the ideal humanity in India, as wonderfully put forward by Sankaracharya at the beginning of his commentary of the Gita where he wants to speak about the reason for Krishna's coming as a preacher for the preservation of Brahminhood, of Brahminness. That was the great end. This Brahman, the man of God, he who has known Brahman, the ideal man, the perfect man, must remain; he must not go. And with all the defects of the caste now, we know that we must all be ready to give to Brahmans this credit, that from them have come more men with that real Brahminness in them than from other castes. That is true. That is the credit due to them from all these castes. We must be bold enough, must be brave enough to speak of their defects, but at the same time we must give the credit that is due to them. Remember the old English proverb 'give every man his due.' Therefore, my friends, it is no use fighting among the castes. What good will it do? It will divide us all the more, weaken us all the more, degrade us all the more. The days of exclusive privileges and exclusive claims are gone, gone for ever from the soil of India, and it is one of the great blessings of the British Rule of India. Even to the Mahomedan Rule we owe that great blessing, destruction of exclusive privi-

* From the lecture on "The Future of India" delivered in Madras.

ege. That Rule was, after all, not all bad; nothing is all bad, and nothing is all good. The Mahomedan conquest of India came as salvation to the downtrodden, to the poor. That is why one-fifth of our people have become Mahomedans. It was not all the sword that did it. It would be the height of madness to think it was all the work of sword and fire. And one-fifth—one-half—of your Madras people will become Christians if you do not take care. Was there ever a sillier thing before in the world than what I saw in the Malabar country. The poor Pariah is not allowed to pass through the same street as the high-caste man, but if he changes his name to a hodge-podge English name it is all right; or a Mahomedan name, it is all right. What inference would you draw except that these Malabaris are all lunatics, their homes so many lunatic asylums and that they are to be treated with derision by every race in India until they mend their manners and know better. Shame upon them that such wicked and diabolical customs are allowed; their own children allowed to die of starvation and as soon as those children belong to somebody else, feeding them fat. Yet with all this there ought to be no more fight between the castes. The solution is not by bringing down the higher, but by raising the lower up to the level of the higher. And that is the line of work that is found in all our books, in spite of what you may hear from some people whose knowledge of their own scriptures and whose capacity to understand the mighty plans of the ancients are only zero. These would not understand, but those do that have brains, that have the intellect to understand the whole scope of the work, to stand aside for a moment and look at the wonderful procession of the national life through ages and ages as laid down, as can be traced bit by bit through all the books

ancient and modern. What is the plan? The ideal at one end is the Brahmin and the ideal at the other end is the Chandala, and the whole work is to raise the Chandala up to the Brahmin. Slowly and slowly you find more and more privileges granted to them. There are books where you read such fierce words as these: "If the Sudra hears, fill his ears with molten lead, and if he remembers a line cut him to pieces. If he says to the Brahmin 'you Brahmin' cut his tongue out." Diabolical old barbarism, no doubt, it goes without saying, but do not blame the lawgivers, who simply recorded the customs of some section of the community. Such devils arose among those ancients. There have been devils everywhere more or less in all ages. Then you find that this is toned down a little; only—do not disturb them but do not teach them higher things. Then slowly we find in other Smritis, especially those that have full power now, that if the Sudras imitate the manners and customs of the Brahmins they are best off, they ought to do that. Thus it is going on. I have no time to place before you all these workings, how they can be traced in detail; but coming to plain facts we find that all the castes are to rise slowly and slowly; however, there are thousands of castes and some are even getting admissiom into Brahminhood; for what prevents any caste from declaring they are Brahmins? Thus caste, with all its rigour, has been made in that way. Say there are castes here with ten thousand people each. If these put their heads together and say we will call ourselves Brahmins, nothing can stop them; who is to say nay. I see it in my own life. Some castes become strong, and as soon as they all agree who is to say nay? Because whatever it be, each caste is exclusive of the other. It

does not meddle with the other's affairs, even the several divisions of one caste do not meddle with the other divisions and those great epoch-makers, Sankaracharya and others, were the great caste-makers. I cannot tell you all the wonderful things they manufactured, and some of you may be angry with me. But in my travels and experiences I have been tracing them out, and most wonderful results I have arrived at. They would sometimes get whole hordes of Beluchees and make them Kshatrias in one minute, whole hordes of fishermen and make them Brahmins in one minute. They were all Rishis and sages and we have to bow down to their memory. Well, be you all Rishis and sages. That is the secret. More or less we shall all be Rishis. What is meant by a Rishi, the pure one? Be pure first, and you will have the power. Simply saying "I am a Rishi" will not do, but when you are a Rishi, you will find they will obey you somehow or other. Something mysterious comes out from you which makes them follow you, makes them hear you, makes them unconsciously, even against their will, carry out your plans. That is the Rishihood. Now, these are not details of course. Details have to be worked out through generations. But this is just an idea in order to show you that these quarrels should not be. I am extremely sorry that in modern times there is so much fight between the castes. This must go. It is useless on both sides, on the side of the higher caste, especially the Brahmins, because the day for these privileges and exclusive claims is gone. The duty of every aristocracy is to dig its own grave, and the sooner it does the better. The more it delays, the more it will fester and die a worse death. It is the duty of the Brahmin, therefore, to work for the salvation of the rest of mankind in India. If he does tha

and so long as he does that, he is a Brahmin, but he is no Brahmin when he goes about making money.

You should give help only to the rightful Brahmin, who deserves it; that leads to heaven, but sometimes gifts to another person who does not deserve them lead to the other place, says our scripture. You must take care of that. He only is the Brahmin who has no secular employment. Secular employment is not for the Brahmin but for the other castes. To the Brahmins I appeal that they must work hard to raise the Indian people by teaching them what they have, by teaching out of the culture that they have accumulated for centuries. It is the duty clearly of the Brahmins of India to remember that they are really Brahmins. As Manu says, all these privileges and honors are given to the Brahmin because "with him is the treasury of virtue." You must open that treasury and distribute it to the world. It is true that he was the oldest preacher, as he has been called, to the Indian human races, because he was the first to give up all for the higher realisation of life before others could come. It was not his fault that he marched ahead of the other castes. Why did not the other castes understand and do likewise? Why did the others first sit down and be lazy, and make the race between the hare and the tortoise? But it is one thing to gain an advantage, and another thing to preserve it for evil use. Whenever power is used for evil it is diabolical; it must be used for good. So this accumulated culture of ages, of which the Brahmin has been the trustee, he must now give to the people at large, and it was because he did not give it to the people at large that the Mahomedan invasion happened. It was because he did not open this treasury to the people at first, that for a thousand years we are trodden under

the heels of every one who choose to come into India, it was for that we have become degraded, and the first question must be the breaking open the cells that hide the wonderful treasures which our common ancestors accumulated. Bring these treasures out, and give them to everybody, and the Brahmin must do it first. There is an old superstition in Bengal that if the cobra that bites sucks out his own poison, the patient must survive. Well then, the Brahmin must suck out his own poison. To the non-Brahmin castes I say, wait, be not in a hurry. Do not be getting hold of every opportunity of fighting the Brahmin, because I have shown you it was your own fault. Who told you not to be spiritual, and great Sanskrit scholars? What have you been doing all this time? Why have you been lazy and now fret and fume because somebody had more brains, more energy, more pluck and go than you? Instead of wasting your energies in these vain discussions and quarrels in the pages of our newspapers now and then, instead of trying to fight and quarrel in your own homes—it is devilish, sinful, wicked—use all your energies in acquiring the culture which the Brahmin has and the thing is done. Why do you not become Sanskrit scholars? Why do you not spend millions to bring Sanskrit education among all the castes of India? That is the question. The moment you do that, you are equal to the Brahmin. That is the secret in India. Sanskrit and prestige come together in India. As soon as you have that, no more dare any body say anything against you. That is the one secret; take up that. The whole universe, to use the ancient Advaitist's simile, is in a state of self-hypnotism. It is the will that is the power. It is the man of strong will that throws, as it were, a halo round him and brings all other people to the same state of vibration as he has

in his own mind. Such gigantic men appear and what is the idea? That when many of us have the same thought, we become so powerful. Why is it that organisations are so powerful? Why is it, to take a case in hand, that 40 millions of Englishmen rule 300 millions of people here? You say organisation is material. What is the psychological explanation? These 40 millions can put their wills together and that means infinite power and you 300 millions are each separate from the other. Therefore to make a great future India, the whole secret lies in that organisation, accumulation, co-ordination of powers, of wills. Already before my mind rises one of the marvellous verses of the Atharvana Veda Samhita which says "Be you all of one mind, be you all of one thought, for in the days of yore, the gods being of one mind were enabled to receive oblations." That the gods can be worshipped by men was because they were of one mind, and that is true. Being of one mind is the secret of society. And the more you go on fighting and quarrelling on all sorts of nonsense as Dravidian and Aryan, and all such nonsense as the question of Brahmins and non-Brahmins and all that, the further you are off from that accumulation of energy and power which is going to make the future India. For, mark you, the future India depends entirely upon that, this is the secret, accumulation of the will-powers, co-ordination bringing them all, as it were, into one focus. Each Chinaman thinks his own way, and a handful of Japanese think all in the same way, and you know the result. That is how it goes throughout the history of the world. You find compact little nations always governing and ruling huge unwieldy nations in every case, and it is natural, because it is easier for the little compact nations to bring their ideas into the same focus, and they become developed.

And the bigger the nation, the more unwieldy it is: in it men are born, as it were, a disorganised mob and cannot put their heads together. All these quarrels must stop.

—:o:—

EDUCATION ON NATIONAL LINES.*

WE must have a hold on the spiritual and secular education of the nation. Do you understand that? You must dream, you must talk, and you must think and you must work. Till then there is no salvation for the race. This education that you are getting now has some good points but it has a tremendous evil at its back, and this evil is so great that the good things are all weighed down. In the first place it is not a man-making education, it is merely and entirely a negative education. A negative education or any training that consists negation is worse than death. The child is taken to school and the first thing he learns is that his father was a fool, the second his grandfather was a crazy lunatic, the third that all his teachers were hypocrites, the fourth that all the sacred books were lies! By the time he is 16 he is a mass of negation, lifeless and boneless. And the result is that fifty years of such education have not produced one man in the three Presidencies. Every original man that has been produced has been educated elsewhere and not in this country, or they have gone to the old universities once more to cleanse themselves of superstitions. This is not education. Education is not the amount of information that is put into your brain and running riot there, undigested, making a battle of Waterloo all your life. We must have life-building, man-making character-making, assimilation of ideas. If you have

* From the lecture on "The Future of India."

assimilated five ideas and made them your life and character, you have more education than any man who can give by heart a whole library. "The ass carrying its load of sandalwood knows only the weight and not the value of the sandalwood." If education means information, the libraries are the greatest sages in the world and encyclopædias are the Rishis. The ideal, therefore, is that we must have the whole education of our country, spiritual and secular, in our own hands and it must be on national lines, through national methods, as far as practicable. Of course this is a very big scheme, a big plan. I do not know whether it will ever work itself out but we must begin the work. How? For instance, take Madras. We must start a temple, must have a temple, for, with Hindus religion must come first. Then you say, all sects will quarrel about the temple. We will make a non-sectarian temple giving only "Om" as the symbol, the greatest symbol of any sect. If there is any sect here which believes that "Om" ought not to be the symbol it has no right to be Hindu. All will have the right to interpret ideas, each one according to his own sect, but we must have a common temple. You can have your own images and things in other places, but do not quarrel with the other people. There should be taught there the common grounds of our different sects and at the same time the different sects should have perfect liberty to come there and teach their doctrines, with only one restriction—not to quarrel with other sects. Say what you have to say, the world wants it; but the world has no time to hear what you think about other people, keep that to yourselves. Secondly, along with this temple there should be an institution to train teachers and preachers. These teachers must go about preaching both religion and

secular knowledge to our people; they must carry both as we have been already carrying religion from door to door. Let us along with religion carry secular education from door to door. That can be easily done. Then the work will extend through these bands of teachers and preachers, and gradually we shall have similar temples in other centres, until we have covered the whole of India. That is the plan. It may appear gigantic. But that is needed. You may ask where is the money. Money is not needed. Money is nothing. For the last twelve years of my life I did not know where the next meal would come from, but money and everything I want must come, because they are my slaves and not I theirs; money and everything else must come. Must, that is the word. Where are the men? That is the question. I have told you what we have become. Where are the men? Young men of Madras, my hope is in you. Do you respond to the call of your nation? Each one of you has a glorious future if you dare believe me. Have the tremendous faith in yourselves which I had when I was a child and I am working it out. Have that faith, each one, in yourself, that eternal power is lodged in every one of our souls. You will revive the whole of India. Aye, we will go to every country under the sun and our ideas must be within the next ten years a component of the many forces that are working to make up every nation in the world. We must enter into the life of every race inside India and outside India; we will work. That is how it should be. I want young men. Says the Vedas, "It is the strong, the healthy, of sharp intellect and young that will reach the Lord." This is the time to decide your future—with this energy of youth, when you have not been worked out, not become faded, but still in the freshness and

vigour of youth. Work; this is the time for the freshest, the most untouched and unsmelled fresh flowers, alone to be laid at the feet of the Lord. He receives. Get up, therefore, greater works are to be done than picking quarrels and becoming lawyers and other things. Far greater is this sacrifice of yourselves for the benefit of your race, for the welfare of humanity, for life is short. What is in this life? You are Hindus and there is the instinctive belief in you that life is eternal. Sometimes I have young men in Madras coming and talking to me about Atheism. I do not believe a Hindu can become an atheist. He may read European books and persuade himself he is a materialist, but only for five months, mark you. It is not in your blood. You cannot believe what is not in your constitution; it would be a hopeless task for you. Do not attempt that sort of thing. I once attempted when I was a boy! But it could not be. Life is short, but the soul is immortal and eternal, and therefore one thing being certain, death, let us take up a great ideal, and give up the whole life to it. Let this be our determination, and may He, the Lord, who "comes again and again for the salvation of His own people," speaking from our scriptures,—may the great Krishna bless us and lead us all to the fulfilment of our aims!

———:o:———

THE CONQUEST OF THE WORLD BY INDIAN THOUGHT.*

WITH all my love for India, and with all my patriotism, and veneration for the ancients, I cannot but think that we have to learn many things from the world. We must be always ready to sit at the feet of all, to learn great lessons; for, mark you, every one can teach us great lessons. Says our great law-giver, Manu : " Receive some good knowledge even from the low born and even from the man of lowest birth, learn by service the road to heaven." We, therefore, as true children of Manu must obey his commands, and be ready to learn the lessons of this life or the life hereafter from any one who can teach us. At the same time, we must not forget that we have also to teach a great lesson to the world. We cannot do without the world outside India ; it was our foolishness that we thought we could, and we have paid the penalty by about a thousand years of slavery. That we did not go out to compare things with other nations, did not mark the workings that have been all around us, has been the one great cause of this degradation of the Indian mind. We have paid the penalty; let us do it no more. All such foolish ideas that Indians must not go out of India are childish. They must be knocked on the head ; the more you go out and travel among the nations of the world, the better for you and for

* From the lecture on " The Work before Us " delivered in Madras.

your country. If you had done that for hundreds of years past you would not be here to-day, at the feet of every country that wants to rule India. The first manifest effect of life is expansion. You must expand if you want to live. The moment you have ceased to expand death is upon you, danger is ahead. I went to America and Europe to which you so kindly allude; I had to go because that is the first sign of the revival of national life, expansion. This national reviving life, expanding inside, threw me off and thousands will be thrown off in that way. Mark my words, it has got to come if this nation lives at all. This expansion, therefore, is the greatest of signs of the revival of national life, and through this expansion our quota of offering to the general mass of human knowledge, our part of the general upheaval of the world, is going out to the external world. Again, this is not a new thing. Those of you who think that the Hindus have been always confined within the four walls of their country through all ages are entirely mistaken; they have not studied the whole books, they have not studied the history of the race aright. * * *

I am an imaginative man, and my idea is the conquest of the whole world by the Hindu race. There have been great conquering races in the world. We also have been great conquerors. The story of our conquest has been described by the great Emperor of India, Asoka, as the conquest of religion and of spirituality. Once more the world must be conquered by India. This is the dream of my life, and I wish that each one of you who hears me to-day, will have the same dream in your minds, and stop not till you have realised the dream. They will tell you every day that we had better look to our own homes first, then go to work outside. But I will tell you in plain language that you work best when you work for others. The best

work that you ever did for yourself was when you worked for others, trying to disseminate your ideas in foreign languages, beyond the seas, and this very meeting is proof how that is helping your own country, the attempt to enlighten other countries with your thoughts. One-fourth of the effect that has been produced in this country by my going to England and America would not have been produced had I confined my ideas only to India. This is the great ideal before us, and every one must be ready for it, the conquest of the whole world by India is nothing less than that, and we must all get ready for it, strain every nerve for it. Let foreigners come and flood the land with their armies, never mind. Up, India, and conquer the world with your spirituality! Aye, as has been declared on this soil, first, love must conquer hatred, hatred cannot conquer itself. Materialism and all its miseries can never be conquered by materialism. Armies when they attempt to conquer armies only multiply and make brutes of humanity. Spirituality must conquer the West. Slowly they are finding it out that what they want is spirituality to preserve them as nations. They are waiting for it, they are eager for it. Where is the supply to come from? Where are the men ready to go out to every country in the world with the messages of the great sages of India? Where are the men who are ready to sacrifice everything so that this message shall reach every corner of the world? Such heroic souls are wanted to help the spread of truth. Such heroic workers are wanted to go abroad and help to disseminate the great truths of the Vedanta. The world wants it; without it the world will be destroyed. The whole of the Western world is on a volcano which may burst to-morrow, go to pieces to-morrow. They have searched every corner of the world and have found no respite. They

have drunk deep of the cup of pleasure and found it vanity. Now is the time to work for India's spiritual ideas penetrating deep into the West. Therefore, you young men of Madras, I specially ask you to remember this. We must go out, we must conquer the world through our spirituality and philosophy. There is no other alternative; we must do it or die. The only condition of national life, of awakened and vigorous national life, is the conquest of the world by Indian thought.

* * * * *

You hear of claims made by every one of the different religions as being the universal religion of the world. Let me tell you in the first place that perhaps there never will be such a thing, but if there is a religion which can lay that claim, it is only ours and none else, because every other religion depends on some person or persons. All the other religions have been built round the life of what they think a historical man, and what they think the strength of religion is really the weakness; for, smash the historicality of the man and the whole building tumbles to the ground. Half the lives of these great centres of religions have been broken into pieces, and the other half doubted very seriously. As such, every truth that had its only sanction in their words vanishes into air again. But the truths of our religion, although we have persons by the bushelful, do not depend on them. The glory of Krishna is not that He was Krishna, but that He was the great teacher of Vedanta. If He had not been, His name would have died out of India as the name of Buddha has. Thus our allegiance is to the principle always and not to the persons. Persons are but the embodiments, the illustrations of the principles. If the principles are there, the persons will come by the thousands and millions. If the

principle is safe, persons and Buddhas by the hundreds and thousands will be born. But if the principle is lost and forgotten and the whole of national life tries to cling round a so-called historical person, woe unto that religion, danger unto that religion. Ours is the only religion, therefore, that does not depend on a person or persons; it is based upon principles.

— :o —

THE HIMALAYAS.*

THIS is the land of dreams of our forefathers, in which was born Parvati, the mother of India. This is the holy land, where every ardent soul in India wants to come at the end of its life and to close the last chapter of its mortal career. There on the tops of the mountains of this blessed land, in the depths of its caves, on the banks of its rushing torrents, have been thought out the most wonderful thoughts, a little bit of which has drawn so much admiration even from foreigners, and which have been pronounced by the most competent of judges to be incomparable. This is the land in which, since my very childhood, I have been dreaming of passing my life, and, as all of you are aware, I have attempted again and again to live for ever, and, although the time was not ripe, and I had work to do and was whirled outside of this holy place, yet it is the hope of my life to end my days somewhere in this father of mountains, where Rishis lived, where philosophy was born. Perhaps, my friends, I shall not be able to do it, in the same way that it was my plan before—that silence, that unknownness, yet I sincerely pray and hope, and almost believe, my last days will be here of all places on earth. Inhabitants of this holy land, accept my gratitude for the kind praise that has fallen from you for my little work in the West. But, at the same time, my mind does not

* From the Reply to the Address of Welcome presented at Almora after the Swami's return from America.

want to speak of these works, either in the East or in the West. As peak after peak of this father of mountains began to appear before my sight, all those propensities to work, that ferment that had been going on in my brain for years, seemed to quiet down, and instead or talking about what had been done, and what was going to be done, the mind reverted to that one eternal theme which the Himalayas always teach us, that one theme which is reverberating in the very atmosphere of the place, the one theme the murmur of whose dreams I hear, the one thing that I hear in the rushing whirlpools of its rivers—renunciation. "*Sarvambosti bhayanwitam bhuvi krinam bairagya mevabhayam,*—every thing in this life is fraught with fear. It is renunciation that makes one fearless." Yes, this is the land of renunciation. The time will not permit me, and the circumstances are not proper, to speak to you fully. I shall have to conclude, therefore, by pointing out to you that these Himalayas stand for that renunciation, and the grand lesson we shall ever teach unto humanity will be renunciation. As our forefathers used to be attracted towards it in the latter days of their lives, so, strong souls from all quarters of this earth, in time to come, will be attracted to this father of mountains, when all this fight between sects, and all those differences in dogmas, will not be remembered any more, and quarrels between your religion and my religion will have vanished altogether when mankind will understand that there is but one eternal religion, and that is the perception of the Divine within, and the rest is mere froth; such ardent souls will come here knowing that the world is but vanity of vanities, knowing that every thing is useless except the worship of the Lord and the Lord alone. Friends, you have been very kind to allude to one idea I have yet in my brain, to

start a centre in the Himalayas and, perhaps, I have sufficiently explained myself why it should be so, why, above all, this is the spot which I want to select as one of the great centres to teach this universal religion. These mountains are associated with the best memories of our race, if these Himalayas are taken away from the history of religious India, there will be very little left behind. Here, therefore, must be one of those centres, not merely of activity, but more of calmness, of meditation, and of peace, and I hope some day to realise it.

——:o:——

DR. PAUL DEUSSEN. *

MORE than a decade has passed since a young German student, one of eight children of a not very well-to-do clergyman, heard on a certain day Professor Lassen lecturing on a language and literature new—very new even at that time—to European scholars, namely, Sanskrit. The lectures were of course free; for even now it is impossible for any one in any European University to make a living by teaching Sanskrit, unless indeed the University backs him.

Lassen was almost the last of that heroic band of German scholars (for, heroic certainly they were,—what interest except their pure and unselfish love of knowledge could German scholars have had at that time in Indian literature?), the pioneers of Sanskrit scholarship in Germany. The veteran Professor was expounding a chapter of *Sakuntala*; and on that day there was no one there more eagerly and attentively listening to Lassen's exposition than our young student. The subject matter of the exposition was of course interesting and wonderful, but more wonderful was that strange language, the strange sounds of which, although uttered with all those difficult peculiarities that Sanskrit consonants are subjected to in the mouths of unaccustomed Europeans, had a strange fascination for him. He came home to his lodgings, but that night sleep could not make him oblivious of what he had heard. A glimpse of a hitherto unknown land had been given to him, a land far more gorgeous in its colours

* Reprinted from the "Brahmavadin," 1896

than any he had yet seen, and having a power of fascination never yet experienced by his young and ardent soul.

Naturally, his friends were anxiously looking forward to the ripening of his brilliant parts, and expected that he would soon enter a learned profession which might bring him respect, fame, and, above all, the convenience and the decency of a good pay. But then there was this Sanskrit! The vast majority of European scholars had not even heard of it then; as for making it pay,—I have already said that such a thing is impossible even now. Yet his desire to learn it was strong. It has unfortunately become hard for us, modern Indians, to understand how it could be like that; nevertheless, there are to be met with in Benares and Nadya and other places even now some old as well as young persons among our *Pandits*, and mostly among the *Sanyasins*, who are mad with this kind of thirst for knowledge for its own sake. Students, not placed in the midst of the luxurious surroundings and materials of the modern Europeanised Hindu, and with a thousand times less facilities for study; pouring over manuscripts in the flickering light of an oil-lamp night after night, which alone would have been enough to completely destroy the eyesight of students of any other nation; travelling on foot hundreds of miles, begging their way all along, in search of a rare manuscript or a noted teacher; and wonderfully concentrating all the energy of their body and mind upon their one object of study, year in and year out, till the hair turns grey and the infirmity of age overtakes them;—such students have not, through God's mercy, as yet disappeared altogether from our country. Whatever India now has as a proud possession has been undeniably the result of such labour on the part of her worthy sons in days gone by; and the truth of this re-

mark will become at once evident on comparing the depth and solidity as well as the unselfishness and the earnestness of purpose of India's ancient scholarship with the results attained by our modern Indian Universities. Unselfish and genuine zeal for real scholarship and honest earnest thought must again become dominant in the life of our countrymen, if they are ever to rise to occupy among nations a rank worthy of their own historic past. It is this kind of desire for knowledge which has made Germany what she is now,—one of the foremost if not the foremost, among the nations of the world.

Yes, the desire to learn Sanskrit was strong in the heart of this German student. It was a long up-hill work—this learning of Sanskrit; with him too it was the same world-old story of successful scholars and their hard work, their privations and their indomitable energy,—and also the same glorious conclusion of a really heroic achievement. He thus achieved success; and now—not only Europe but all India knows this man, Paul Deussen, who is the Professor of Philosophy in the University of Kiel. I have seen Professors of Sanskrit in America and in Europe. Some of them are very sympathetic towards Vedantic thought. I admire their intellectual acumen and their lives of unselfish labour. But Paul Deussen—or, as he prefers to be called in Sanskrit, *Deva-Sena*—and the veteran Max Muller have impressed me as being the truest friends of India and Indian thought. It will always be among the most pleasing episodes in my life—my first visit to this ardent Vedantist at Kiel, his gentle wife who travelled with him in India, and his little daughter, the darling of his heart,—and our travelling together through Germany and Holland to London and the pleasant meetings we had in and about London.

The earliest school of Sanskritists in Europe entered into the study of Sanskrit with more imagination than critical ability. They knew a little, expected much from that little, and often tried to make too much of what little they knew. Then in those days even such vagaries as the estimation of *Sakuntala* as forming the high water mark of Indian philosophy were not altogether unknown! These were naturally followed by a reactionary band of superficial critics more than real scholars of any kind, who knew little or nothing of Sanskrit, expected nothing from Sanskrit studies, and ridiculed everything from the East. While criticising the unsound imaginativeness of the early school to whom every thing in Indian literature was rose and musk, these, in their turn, went into speculations which, to say the least, were equally highly unsound and indeed very venturesome. And their boldness was very naturally helped by the fact that these over-hasty and unsympathetic scholars and critics were addressing an audience whose entire qualification for pronouncing any judgment in the matter was their absolute ignorance of Sanskrit. What a medley of results from such critical scholarship! Suddenly, on one fine morning, the poor Hindu woke up to find that every thing that was his was gone; one strange race had snatched away from him his arts, another his architecture, and a third whatever there was of his ancient sciences; why, even his religion was not his own! yes—that too had migrated into India in the wake of a Pehlevi cross of stone!! After a feverish period of a Pehlevi treading-on-each-other's-toes of original research a better state of things has dawned. It has now been found out that mere adventure without some amount of the capital of real and ripe scholarship produces nothing but ridiculous failure even in the business of oriental

research, and that the traditions in India are not to be rejected with supercilious contempt as there is really more in them than most people ever dream of.

There is now coming into existence in Europe a new type of Sanskrit scholars, reverential, sympathetic, and learned,—reverential because they are a better stamp of men, and sympathetic because they are learned. And the link which connects the new portion of the chain with the old one is of course our Max Muller. We Hindus certainly owe more to him than to any other Sanskrit scholar in the West, and I am simply astonished when I think of the gigantic task which he, in his enthusiasm, undertook as a young man and brought to a successful conclusion in his old age. Think of this man without any help, pouring over old manuscripts, hardly legible to the Hindus themselves and in a language to acquire which takes a life-time even in India,—without even the help of any needy *Pandit.*

If Max Muller is thus the old pioneer of the new movement, Deussen is certainly one of its younger advanced guard. Philolgical interest had hidden long from view the gems of thought and spirituality to be found in the mine of our ancient scriptures. Max Muller brought out a few of them and exhibited them to the public gaze, compelling attention to them by means of his authority as the foremost philologist. Deussen, unhampered by any philological leanings and possessing the training of a philosopher singularly well versed in the speculations of ancient Greece and modern Germany, took up the cue and plunged boldly into the metaphysical depths of the *Upanishads*, found them to be fully safe and satisfying, and then—equally boldly—declared the fact before the whole world. Deussen is certainly the freest among Scholars in the expression of his opinion about the

Vedanta. He never stops to think about the "What they would say" of the vast majority of scholars. We indeed require bold men to tell us bold words about truth in this world ; and nowhere is this more true now than in Europe where, through the fear of social opinion and such other causes, there has been enough in all conscience of the whitewashing and apologising attitude among scholars towards creeds and customs, which, in all probability, not many among them really believe in. The greater is the glory therefore to Max Muller and to Deussen for their bold and open advocacy of truth ! May they be as bold in showing to us our defects, the later corruptions in our thought-systems in India, especially in their application to our social needs. Just now we very much require the help of such genuine friends as these to check the growing virulence of the disease, very prevalent in India, of running either to the one extreme of slavish panygerists who cling to every village superstition as the innermost essence of the *Sastras*, or to the other extreme of demoniacal denouncers who see no good in us and in our history, and will, if they can, at once dynamite all the social and spiritual organisations of our ancient land of religion and philosophy.

——:o:——

MAX MULLER—A VEDANTIST.

SWAMI Vivekananda writing to the *Brahmavadin* about his visit to Professor Max Muller, said among other things :—

" What an extraordinary man is Prof. Max Muller! He was first induced to inquire about the power behind, which led to sudden and momentous changes in the life of the late Keshava Chandra Sen; and since then he has been an earnest student and admirer of the life and teachings of Sri Ramakrishna.* " Ramakrishna is worshipped by thousands to-day Professor," I said. " To whom else shall worship be accorded, if not to such ?" was the answer. The Professor was kindness itself : he asked Mr. Sturdy and myself to lunch with him and showed us several colleges in Oxford and the Bodleian Library. He also accompanied us to the Railway station ; and all this he did because, as he said, " It is not every day one meets a disciple of Ramakrishna Paramahamsa. " That was really a revelation to me. That nice little house in its setting of a beautiful garden, the silver-headed sage, with a face calm and benign, and a forehead smooth as a child's in spite of seventy winters and every line in that face speaking of a deep-seated mine of spirituality somewhere behind ; that noble wife, the helpmate of his life through his long and arduous task of exciting interest, over-riding opposition and contempt, and at last creating a respect for the thoughts of the sages of ancient India—the trees, the

* The great Guru of Swami Vivekananda, one of the greatest of the Modern Saints.

flowers, the calmness, and the clear sky—all these sent me back in imagination to the glorious days of Ancient India the days of our *Brahmarishis* and *Rajarishis*, the days of the great *Vanaprasthas*, the days of Arundhatis and Vasishtas.

It was neither the Philologist nor the Scholar that I saw, but a soul that is every day realising its oneness with the *Brahman*, a heart that is every moment expanding, to reach oneness with the universal. Where others lose themselves in the desert of day details, he has struck a well of life. Indeed his heart-beats have caught the rhythm of the *Upanishads*, " Know *thyself* and leave off all other talk."

Although a world-moving scholar and philosopher, his learning and philosophy have only led him higher and higher to the realization of the spirit ; his lower knowledge has, indeed, helped him to reach the higher. This is real learning. Knowledge gives rise to humility. Of what use is knowledge if it does not show us the way to the highest ?

And what love he bears towards India ! I wish I had a hundredth part of that love for my own motherland. An extraordinary and at the same time, intensely active mind, has lived and moved in the world of Indian thought for fifty years or more, and watched the sharp interchange of light and shade in the interminable forest of Sanskrit literature with keen interest and heart-felt love, till they have all sunk into his whole soul and coloured his whole being.

Max Muller is a Vedantist of Vedantists. He has, indeed, caught the real soul of the melody of the Vedanta in the midst of all its settings of harmonies or discords—the one light that lightens up the sects and creeds of the world, the Vedanta, the one principle of which all religions are

only applications. And what was Ramakrishna Paramahamsa? The practical demonstration of this ancient principle, the embodiment of India that is past, and a foreshadowing of the India that is to be, the bearer of spiritual light unto nations. The jeweller alone can understand the worth of jewels ; this is an old proverb. Is it a wonder that this Western sage does study and appreciate every new star in the firmament of Indian thoughts before even the Indians themselves realise its magnitude ?

"When are you coming to India ? Every heart there would welcome one who has done so much to place the thoughts of their ancestors in the true light," I said. The face of the aged sage brightened up—there was almost a tear in his eye, a gentle nodding of the head, and slowly the words came out—" I would not return then ; you would have to cremate me there." Further questions seemed an unwarrantable intrusion into realms wherein are stored the holy secrets of man's heart.

Who knows but that it was what the Poet has said:—

" He remembers with his mind the friendships of former births, firmly rooted in his heart."

His life has been a blessing to the world ; may it be many, many years more, before he changes the present plane of his existence.

——:o:——

AN APPEAL TO INDIANS.*

IT has been said before, that India is slowly awakening through her friction with the outside nations; and as the result of this little awakening is the appearance, to a certain extent, of free and independent thought in modern India. On one side is modern Western Science, dazzling the eyes with the brilliancy of myriad suns, and driving in the chariot of hard and fast facts collected by the application of tangible powers direct in their incision; on the other, are the hopeful and strengthening traditions of her ancient forefathers, in the days when she was at the zenith of her glory,—traditions, that have been brought out of the pages of her history by the sages of her own land and outside, that run for numberless years and centuries, through her every vein with the quickening of life drawn from universal love,—traditions, that reveal unsurpassed valour, superhuman genius, and supreme spirituality, which are the envy of the gods,—these inspire her with future hopes. On one side, rank materialism, plenitude of fortune, accumulation of gigantic power and intense sense-pursuits have through foreign literature caused a tremendous stir; on the other, through the confounding din of all these discordant sounds, she hears, in low, yet accents unmistakable, the heart-rending cries of her ancient gods, cutting her to the quick. There lie before her various strange luxuries introduced from the West,—celestial drinks, costly well-served food, splendid

*Extract from an English translation of a Bengalee contribution to the *Udbhodana*.

apparel, magnificent palaces, new modes of conveyance,—new manners, new fashions, dressed in which moves about the well-educated girl in shameless freedom,—all these are arousing unfelt desires in her; again, the scene changes and in its place appear, with stern presence, Sita, Savitri, austere religious vows, fastings, the sage's recluse, the orange garb of the semi-naked, homeless Sannyasin, Samadhi and the search after the Self. On one side, is the independence of Western societies based on self-interest; on the other, is the extreme self-sacrifice of the Aryan society. In this violent conflict, is it strange that Indian society should be tossed up and down? Of the West, the goal is—individual independence; the language—money-making education, the means—politics; of India, the goal is—Mukti, the language—the Veda, the means—renunciation. For a time, Modern India thinks, as it were,—"I am ruining this worldly life of mine in vain expectation of uncertain spiritual welfare hereafter, which has spread its fascination over me; and again, lo! spell-bound she listens, "Here, in this world of death and change, O man, where is thy happiness?"

On one side, the New India is saying, "We should have full freedom in the selection of husband and wife; because, the marriage, in which are involved the happiness and misery of all our future life, we must have the right to determine, according to our own free will." On the other, the Old India is dictating, "Marriage is not for sense enjoyment, but to perpetuate the race. This is the Indian conception of marriage. By the producing of children, you are contributing to, and are responsible for, the future good or evil of the society. Hence, society has the right to dictate whom you shall marry and whom you shall not. That form of marriage obtains in society, which is conducive

most to its well-being; do you give up your desire of individual pleasure for the good of the many."

On one side, New India is saying, "If we only adopt Western ideas, Western language, Western food, Western dress and Western manners, we shall be as strong and powerful as the Western nations"; on the other, Old India is saying, "Fools! by imitation, other's ideas never become one's own,—nothing, unless earned, is your own. Does the ass in the lion's skin become the lion?"

On one side, New India is saying, "What the Western nations do are surely good, otherwise how did they become so great?" On the other side, Old India is saying, "The flash of lightning is intensely bright, but only for a moment; look out, boys, it is dazzling your eyes. Beware!"

Have we not then to learn anything from the West? Must we not needs try and exert ourselves for better things? Are we perfect? Is our society entirely spotless, without any flaw?—There are many things to learn, we must struggle for new and higher things till we die,—struggle is the end of human life. Sri Ramakrishna used to say, "*Fata din bânchi, tata din sikhi,*"—"As long as I live, so long I learn." That man or that society, which has nothing to learn, is already in the jaws of death. Yes, learn we must many things from the West,—but there are fears as well.

A certain young man of little understanding used always to blame Hindu Shástras before Sri Ramakrishna. One day, he praised the Bhagavad-Gita, on which Sri Ramakrishna said, "Methinks, some European pandit has praised the Gita, and so he has also followed suit."

O India, this is your terrible danger. The spell of imitating the West is getting such a strong hold upon you, that what is good or what is bad, is no longer decided by

reason, judgment, discrimination, or reference to the Shâstras. Whatever ideas, whatever manners the white men praise or like, are good; whatever things they dislike or censure are bad! Alas! What can be a more tangible proof of foolishness than this?

The Western ladies move freely everywhere,—therefore, that is good; they choose for themselves their husbands,—therefore, that is the highest step of advancement; the Westerners disapprove of our dress, decorations, food and ways of living,—therefore, they must be very bad; the Westerners condemn Image-worship as sinful,—surely then, Image-worship is the greatest sin, there is no doubt of it!

The Westerners say, that worshipping a single Deity is fruitful of the highest spiritual good,—therefore, let us throw our Gods and Goddesses into the river Ganges! The Westerners hold caste distinctions to be obnoxious,—therefore, let all the different castes be jumbled into one! The Westerners say, that child-marriage is the root of all evils,—therefore, that is also very bad, of a certainty it is!

We are not discussing here, whether these customs deserve countenance or rejection; but if the mere disapproval of the Westerners be the measure of the abominableness of our manners and customs, then, it is our duty to raise our emphatic protest against it.

The present writer has, to some extent, personal experience of Western society. His conviction resulting from such experience has been, that there is such a wide divergence between the Western society and the Indian as regards the primal course and goal of each, that any sect in India, framed after the Western model, will miss the aim. We have not the least sympathy with those who,—never having lived in Western society and, therefore,

utterly ignorant of the rules and prohibitions regarding the association of men and women that obtain there, and which act as safeguards to perserve the purity of the Western women,— allow a free rein to the unrestricted intermingling of men and women in our society.

I observed in the West also, that the children of weaker nations, if born in England, give themselves out as Englishmen, instead of Greek, Portuguese, Spaniard, etc., as the case may be. All drift towards the strong;—that the light of glory which shines in the glorious, may anyhow fall and reflect on one's own body, *i.e.*, to shine, in the borrowed light of the great, is the one desire of the weak. When I see Indians dressed in European apparel and costumes, the thought comes to my mind,—perhaps, they feel ashamed to own their nationality and kinship with the ignorant, poor, illiterate, downtrodden people of India!! Nourished by the blood of the Hindu for the last fourteen centuries, the Parsee is no longer a "Native"! Before the arrogance of the casteless, who pretend to be and glorify themselves in being Bráhmans, the true nobility of the old, heroic, high-class Bráhman melts into nothingness! Again, the Westerners have now taught us that those stupid, ignorant, low caste millions of India clad only in a loin cloth are non-Aryans!! They are therefore no more our kith and kin!!!

Oh India! with this slander of others, with this base imitation of others, with this dependence on others, this slavish weakness, this vile detestable cruelty,—wouldst thou with these provisions only, scale the highest pinnacle of civilisation and greatness? Wouldst thou attain, by means of thy disgraceful cowardice, that freedom deserved only by the brave and the heroic? Oh India! forget not— that the ideal of thy womanhood is Sita, Savitri,

Damayanti; forget not—that the God thou worshippest—is the great Ascetic of ascetics, the all-renouncing Sankara, the Lord of Umà; forget not—that thy marriage, thy wealth, thy life are not for sense-pleasure,—are not for thy individual personal happiness; forget not—that thou art born as a sacrifice to the *Mother's* altar; forget not—that thy social order is but the reflex of the Infinite Universal Motherhood; forget not—that the lower classes, the ignorant, the poor, the illiterate, the cobbler, the sweeper, are thy flesh and blood, thy brothers. Thou brave one, be bold, take courage, be proud that thou art an Indian,—and proudly proclaim,—"I am Indian,—every Indian is my brother." Say,—"The ignorant Indian, the poor and destitute Indian, the Brâhman Indian, the Pariah Indian, is my brother." Thou too clad with but a rag round thy loins proudly proclaim at the top of thy voice,—"The Indian is my brother,—the Indian is my life, India's God and Goddess are my God, India's society is the cradle of my infancy, the pleasure-garden of my youth, the sacred haven, the *Bàrànasi*, of my old age," Say, brother,—"The soil of India is my highest heaven, the good of India is my good," and repeat and pray day and night,—"O Thou Lord of Gouri, O Thou Mother of the Universe, vouchsafe manliness unto me! O Thou Mother of Strength, take away my weakness, take away my unmanliness, and—MAKE ME A MAN!"

———:o:———

WORK AND ITS SECRET.*

ONE of the greatest lessons I have learned in my life is, to pay as much attention to the means of work as to its end. He was a great man from whom I learned it, and his own life was a practical demonstration of this great principle. I have been always learning great lessons from that one principle; and it appears to me that all the secret of success is there:—to pay as much attention to the means as to the end.

Our great defect in life is, that we are so much drawn to the ideal; the goal is so much more enchanting, so much more alluring, so much bigger in our mental horizon, that we lose sight of the details, altogether.

But whenever failure comes, if we analyse it critically, in ninety-nine per cent. of cases, we shall find that it was because we did not pay attention to the means. Proper attention to the finishing, strengthening, of the means, is what we need. With the means all right, the end must come. We forget that it is the cause that produces the effect; the effect cannot come by itself; and unless the causes are exact, proper and powerful, the effect will not be produced. Once the ideal is chosen and the means determined, we may almost let go the ideal; because, we are sure it will be there when the means are perfected. When the cause is there, there is no more difficulty about the effect, the effect is bound to come. If we take care of the cause, the effect will take care of itself. The realisation of the ideal is the effect. The means are the

* Delivered at Los Angles, California, January 4,1900.

cause; attention to the means, therefore, is the great secret of life. We also read this in the Gita and learn that we have to work, constantly work with all our power; to put our whole mind in the work, whatever it be, that we are doing. At the same time, we must not be attached. That is to say, we must not be drawn away from the work by anything else; still, we must be able to quit the work whenever we like.

If we examine our own lives, we find that the greatest cause of sorrow is this: we take up something, and put our whole energy on it;—perhaps it is a failure, and yet we cannot give it up. We know that it is hurting us; that any further clinging to it, is simply bringing misery on us; still, we cannot tear ourselves away from it. The bee came to sip the honey, but its feet stuck to the honey-pot and it could not get away. Again and again, we are finding ourselves in that state. That is the whole secret of existence. Why are we here? We came here to sip the honey, and we find our hands and feet sticking to it. We are caught, though we came to catch. We came to enjoy; we are being enjoyed. We came to rule; we are being ruled. We came to work; we are being worked. All the time, we find that. And this comes into every detail of our life. We are being worked upon by other minds, and we are always struggling to work on other minds. We want to enjoy the pleasures of life; and they eat into our vitals. We want to get everything from nature, but we find in the long run that nature takes everything from us,—depletes us, and casts us aside.

Had it not been for this, life would have been all sunshine. Never mind! With all its failures and successes, with all its joys and sorrows, it can be one succession of sunshine, if we only are not caught.

That is the one cause of misery: we are attached; we are being caught. Therefore, says the Gita: Work constantly; work, but be not attached; be not caught. Reserve unto yourself the power of detaching yourself from everything, however beloved, however much the soul might yearn for it, however great the pangs of misery you feel, if you were going to leave it; still reserve the power of leaving it whenever you want. The weak have no place here, in this life or in any other life. Weakness leads to slavery. Weakness leads to all kinds of misery, physical and mental. Weakness is death. There are hundreds of thousands of microbes surrounding us, but they cannot harm us unless we become weak, until the body is ready and predisposed to receive them. There may be a million microbes of misery, floating about us. Never mind. They dare not approach us; they have no power to get a hold on us, until the mind is weakened. This is the great fact: strength is life; weakness is death. Strength is felicity, life eternal, immortal; weakness is constant strain and misery: weakness is death.

Attachment is the source of all our pleasures. We are attached to our friends, to our relatives: we are attached to our intellectual and spiritual works; we are attached to external objects, so that we may get pleasure from them. What, again, brings misery but this very attachment? We have to detach ourselves to earn joy. If only we had power to detach ourselves at will, there would not be any misery. That man alone will be able to get the best of nature, who having the power of attaching himself to a thing with all his energy, has also the power to detach himself when he should do so. The difficulty is that there must be as much power of attachment as that of detachment. There are men who are never attracted by any-

thing: they can never love; they are hard-hearted and apathetic; they escape most of the miseries of life. But the wall never feels misery; the wall never loves; is never hurt; but it is the wall, after all. Surely it is better to be attached and caught, than to be a wall. Therefore the man who never loves, who is hard and stony, escaping most of the miseries of life, escapes also its joys. We do not want that: that is weakness; that is death. That soul has not been awakened that never feels weakness, never feels misery; that is a callous state. We do not want that.

At the same time, we not only want this mighty power of love, this mighty power of attachment, the power of throwing our whole soul upon a single object, losing ourselves and letting ourselves be annihilated, as it were, for other souls—which is the power of the gods: but we want to be higher even than the gods. The perfect man can put his whole soul upon that one point of love, yet he is unattached. How comes this? There is another secret to learn.

The beggar is never happy. The beggar only gets a dole, with pity and scorn behind it; at least with the thought behind, that the beggar is a low object. He never really enjoys what he gets.

We are all beggars. Whatever we do, we want a return. We are all traders. We are traders in life, we are traders in virtue, we are traders in religion. Alas! and we are also traders in love.

If you come to trade, if it is a question of give-and-take, if it is a question of buy-and-sell, abide by the laws of buying and selling. There is a bad time and there is a good time; there is a rise and a fall in prices: always, you expect the blow to come. It is like looking at the mirror. Your face is reflected: you make a grimace—there is one

in the mirror; if you laugh, the mirror laughs. This is buying and selling, giving and taking.

We get caught. How? Not by what we give, but by what we expect. We get misery in return for our love; not from the fact that we love, but from the fact that we want love in return. There is no misery where there is no want. Desire, want, is the father of all misery. Desires are bound by the laws of success and failure. Desires must bring misery.

The great secret of true success, of true happiness, then, is this: the man who asks for no return, the perfectly unselfish man, is the most successful. It seems to be a paradox: do we not know that every man who is unselfish in life gets cheated, gets hurt? Apparently, yes. "Christ was unselfish, and yet he was crucified." True; but we know that His unselfishness is the reason, the cause of a great victory,—the crowning of millions upon millions of lives with the blessings of true success.

Ask nothing, want nothing in return. Give what you have to give: it will come back to you,—but do not think of that now. It will come back multiplied a thousandfold,—but the attention must not be on that. Yet have the power to give: give, and there it ends. Learn that the whole of life is giving; that nature will force you to give. So, give willingly. Sooner or later you will have to give up. You come into life to accumulate. With clenched hands, you want to take. But nature puts a hand on your throat and makes your hands open. Whether you will it or not, you have to give. The moment you say, "I will not," the blow comes; you are hurt. None is there but will be compelled, in the long run, to give up everything. And the more one struggles against this law the more miserable he feels. It is because we dare not give,

because we are not resigned enough to accede to this grand demand of Nature, that we are miserable. The forest is gone, but we get heat in return. The sun is taking up water from the ocean, to return it in showers. You are a machine for taking and giving: you take in order to give. Ask, therefore, nothing in return; but the more you give, the more will come to you. The quicker you can empty the air out of this room, the quicker it will be filled up by the external air; and if you close all the doors and every aperture, that which is within will remain, but that which is outside, will never come in, and that which is within will stagnate, degenerate, and become poisoned. A river is continually emptying itself into the ocean and is continually filling up again. Bar not the exit into the ocean. The moment you do that, death seizes you.

Be, therefore, not a beggar; be unattached. This is the most terrible task of life! You do not calculate the dangers on the path. Even by intellectually recognising the difficulties, we really do not know them until we feel them. From a distance we may get a general view of a park: well, what of that? We feel and really know it when we are in it. Even if our every attempt is a failure, and we bleed and are torn asunder, yet, through all this, we have to preserve our heart—we must assert our godhead in the midst of all these difficulties. Nature wants us to react, to return blow for blow, cheating for cheating, lie for lie, to hit back with all our might. Then it requires a super-divine power, not to hit back, to keep control, to be unattached.

Every day we renew our determination to be unattached. We cast our eyes back and look at the past objects of our love and attachment, and feel how every one

of them made us miserable; we went down into the depths of despondency because of our 'love'! We found ourselves mere slaves in the hands of others, we were dragged down and down! And we make a fresh determination: "Henceforth, I will be master of myself; henceforth, I will have control over myself." But the time comes and the same story once more! Again, the soul is caught and cannot get out. The bird is in a net, struggling and fluttering. This is our life.

I know the difficulties; tremendous they are; and ninety per cent. of us become discouraged and lose heart, and in our turn, often become pessimists and cease to believe in sincerity, love, and all that is grand and noble. So, we find men who in the freshness of their lives have been forgiving, kind, simple, and guileless, become in old age, lying masks of men. Their minds are a mass of intricacy. There may be a good deal of external policy, possibly; they are not hot-headed; they do not speak, but it would be better for them to do so; their hearts are dead and therefore they do not speak. They do not curse, nor become angry; but it would be better for them to be able to be angry; a thousand times better, to be able to curse. They cannot. There is death in the heart, for cold hands have seized upon it, and it can no more act, even to utter a curse, even to use a harsh word.

All this we have to avoid: therefore I say, we require super-divine power. Super-human power, is not strong enough. Super-divine strength is the only way; the one way out. By it alone can we pass through all these intricacies, through these showers of miseries, unscathed; we may be cut to pieces, torn asunder, yet our hearts must grow nobler and nobler all the time.

It is very difficult, but we can overcome the difficulty by constant practice. We must learn that nothing can happen to us, unless we make ourselves susceptible to it. I have just said, no disease can come to me until the body is ready; it does not depend on the germs alone, but upon a certain pre-disposition which is already in the body. We get only that for which we are fitted. Let us give up our pride and understand this, that never is misery undeserved. There never has been a blow undeserved; there never has been an evil for which I did not pave the way with my own hands. We ought to know that. Analyse yourselves and you will find that every blow you have received, came to you because you prepared yourselves for it. You did half and the external world did the other half: that is how the blow came. That will sober us down. At the same time, from this very analysis will come a note of hope, and the note of hope is: "I have no control over the external world; but that which is in me and nearer unto me, my own world, is in my control. If the two together are required to make a failure; if the two together are necessary to give me a blow, I will not contribute the one which is in my keeping and how then can the blow come? If I get real control over myself, the blow will never come."

We are all the time, from our childhood, trying to lay the blame upon something outside ourselves. We are always standing up to set right other people, and not ourselves. If we are miserable, we say, "Oh, the world is a devil's world." We curse others, and say, "What infatuated fools!" But why should we be in such a world, if we really are so good? If this is a devil's world, we must be devils also, why else, should we be here? "Oh, the people of the world are so selfish!" True enough; but

why should we be found in that company, if we be better? Just think of that.

We only get what we deserve. It is a lie, when we say, the world is bad and we are good. It can never be so. It is a terrible lie we tell ourselves.

This is the first lesson to learn: be determined not to curse anything outside, not to lay the blame upon any one outside: but be a man! stand up! lay the blame on yourself. You will find that is always true. Get hold of yourself!

Is it not a shame, that at one moment we talk so much of our manhood, of our being gods; that we know everything, we can do everything, we are blameless, spotless, the most unselfish people in the world; and at the next moment a little stone hurts us; a little anger from a little Jack wounds us; any fool in the street makes "these gods" miserable! Should this be so if we are such gods? Is it true that the world is to blame? Could God, who is the purest and the noblest of souls, be made miserable, by any of our tricks? If you are so unselfish, you are like God, what world can hurt you? You would go through the seventh hell unscathed, untouched. But the very fact that you complain, and want to lay the blame upon the external world, shows that you feel the external world,—the very fact that you feel, shows that you are not what you claim to be. You only make your offence greater by heaping misery upon misery, by imagining that the external world is hurting you, and crying out, "Oh, this devil's world! This man hurts me; that man hurts me!" and so forth. It is adding lies to misery.

We are to take care of ourselves. That much we can do; and give up attending to others, for a time. Let us perfect the means; the end will take care of itself. For the world can be good and pure, only if our lives are good and pure. It is an effect; and we are the means. Therefore, let us purify ourselves! Let us make ourselves perfect.

—:0:—

JAPAN.*

THe Japanese are one of the cleanliest people on earth. Everything is so neat and tidy. Their streets are nearly all broad and straight, regularly paved. Their cage-like neat little houses, their pine-covered ever-green little hills forming the back-ground of almost every town and village, the short-statured, fair-skinned, quaintly dressed Japs, their movements, attitudes, gestures, every-thing is picturesque. Japan is the land of the picturesque. Every house almost has a garden at the back, very nicely laid out according to Japanese fashion, with small shrubs, grass plots, small artificial waters and small stone bridges.

The Japanese seem now to have fully awakened them-selves to the necessity of the present times. They have now a thoroughly organised army equipped with guns which one of their own officers has invented and which are said to be second to none. They are continuously increasing their navy. I have seen a tunnel bored by a Japanese Engineer, nearly a mile long. The match factories are simply a sight to see. And they are bent upon making everything they want in their own country. There is a Japanese line of steamers plying between China and Japan and which will shortly be running between Bombay and Yokohama. * * * * * * *

I saw quite a lot of temples. In every temple there are some *Mantras* written in old Bangalee characters in Sanskrit. Only a few of the priests know Sanskrit. But they are an intelligent sect. The modern rage for progress

* From a letter written from Japan in 1893.

has penetrated even the priesthood. I can't write what I have in my mind about the Japs in a short letter. Only I want that numbers of our young men must pay a visit to Japan and China every year, especially the Japanese to whom India is still the dream-land of everything high and good. And you, what are you? Boobies talking twaddle all your lives, vain talkers, what are you? Come, see these people and go and hide your faces in very shame.* * * *

Come, be men. Come out of your narrow holes and have a look abroad. See how nations are on their march. Do you love *man*? Do you love your country? Then come, let us struggle for higher and better things. Look not back—no, not even if you see the dearest and nearest cry—look not back, but forward march.

India wants the sacrifice of at least a thousand of her young men—men, mind and not brutes. The English government has been the instrument brought over here by the Lord to break your crystallized civilization and Madras supplied the first men who helped in giving the English a footing—how many men, unselfish and thorough-going men is Madras ready now to supply, to struggle unto life and death to bring about a new state of things—sympathy for the poor—and bread to their hungry mouths—enlightenment to the people at large and struggle unto death to make men of them who have been brought to the level of beasts by the tyranny of your forefathers?

———:o:———

POEMS.

SONG OF THE SANYASIN

Wake up the note! the song that had its birth
Far off, where wordly taint could never reach ;
In mountain caves, and glades of forest deep,
Whose calm no sigh for lust or wealth or fame
Could ever dare to break ; where rolled the stream
Of knowledge, truth and bliss that follows both.
Sing high that note, Sanyasin bold ! say,
"Om tat sat, Om !"

Strike off thy fetters ! Bonds that bind thee down,
Of shining gold, or darker, baser ore ;
Love, hate—good, bad—and all the duel throng.
Know, slave is slave, caressed or whipped, not free ;
For fetters though of gold, are not less strong to bind ;
Then, off with them, Sanyasin bold ! say,
"Om tat sat, Om !"

Let darkness go ; the will-o'-the-wisp that leads
With blinking light to pile more gloom on gloom.
This thirst for life, for ever quench ; it drags
From birth to death, and death to birth the soul.
He conquers all who conquers self. Know this
And never yield, Sanyasin bold ! say,
"Om tat sat, Om !"

"Who sows must reap," they say, and "cause must bring
The sure effect. Good, good; bad, bad; and none
Escape the law. And whoso wears a form
Must wear the chain." Too true; but far beyond
Both name and form is Atman, ever free,
Know thou art That, Sanyasin bold! say,

"Om tat sat, Om!"

They know no truth who dream such vacant dreams
As father, mother, children, wife and friend.
The sexless Self! whose father He? whose child?
Whose friend, whose foe is He who is but One?
The Self is all in all, none else exists;
And thou art That, Sanyasin bold! say,

"Om tat sat, Om!"

There is but one—The Free—The Knower—Self!
Without a name, without a form or stain.
In Him is Maya, dreaming all the dream.
The Witness, He appears as nature, soul;
Know thou art That, Sanyasin bold! say,

"Om tat sat, Om!"

Where seekest thou that freedom, friend, this world
Nor that, can give? In books and temples
Vain they search. Thine only is the hand that holds
The rope that drags thee on; then cease lament;
Let go thy hold, Sanyasin bold! say,

"Om tat sat, Om!"

Say peace to all. From me no danger be
To aught that lives. In those that dwell on high,
In those that lowly creep, I am the Self of all.
All life, both here and there, do I renounce,
All heavens, earths and hells, all hopes and fears.
Thus cut thy bonds, Sanyasin bold!
"Om tat sat, Om!"

Heed then no more how body lives or goes,
Its task is done. Let Karma float it down;
Let one put garlands on, another kick
This frame; say naught. No praise or blame can be
Where praiser, praised, and blamer, blamed are one.
Thus be thou calm, Sanyasin bold! say,
"Om tat sat, Om!"

Truth never comes where lust and fame and greed
Of gain reside. No man who thinks of woman
As his wife can ever perfect be;
Nor he who owns however little, nor he
Whom anger chains, can ever pass through Maya's gates.
So, give these up, Sanyasin bold! say,
"Om tat sat, Om!"

Have thou no home. What home can hold thee, friend?
The sky thy roof; the grass thy bed; and food,
What chance may bring, well cooked or ill, judge not.
No food or drink can taint that noble Self
Which knows itself. The rolling river be
Thou ever, Sanyasin bold! say,
"Om tat sat, Om!"

Few only know the truth, the rest will hate
And laugh at thee great one ; but pay no heed.
Go thou the free, from place to place, and help
Them out of darkness, Maya's veil, without
The fear of pain or search for pleasure, go
Beyond them both, Sanyasin bold ! say,
"Om tat sat, Om !"

Thus, day by day, till Karma's powers spent
Release the soul for ever. No more is birth,
Nor I or thou, nor God or man. The I
Became the All, the All is I and bliss.
Know thou art That, Sanyasin bold ! say,
"Om tat sat, Om !"

—:o—

TO A FRIEND.

Rendered from a Bengali Poem by the Swami.

——:o:——

Where darkness is taken as light,
Misery as happiness,
Where disease passes for health,
Where the new-born's cry shows it's alive;
Dost thou, wise, expect happiness here?

A glaring mixture of heaven and hell,
Who can fly the world?
Tied in the neck with Karma's rope,
Say, where can the slave escape?

Yoga and sense-pleasure,
Family-life and Sannyas,
Devotion and worship and earning riches,
Vows, renunciation and austerities severe,
I have seen through them all;
I know there's not a jot of happiness,
Life's cup of Tantalus;
The nobler your heart,
Be sure, the more your misery.

Thou large-hearted Lover unselfish,
No room in this world for thee;
Can a marble figure brook the blow
That an iron mass can bear?

Couldst thou be as one inert object,
Honey-mouthed, but poison in heart,
Devoid of truth and worshipping self,
Then thou wouldst have a place in this world.

Pledging life for learning,
I spent half my days;
For love, as one insane,
I clutched at shadows lifeless;

Friendless, clad in rags,
Feeding from door to door,
The frame broken under austerities' weight,
What riches have I earned?

Listen, I speak my heart to thee,
I have found in my life this truth supreme,—
Buffeted by waves, this whirl of life,
One ferry takes across,——

The formulas of worship, the control of breath,
Science, philosophy, systems varied,
Renunciation and possession,
Are but delusions of the mind;——
Love, Love, that is the only thing.

Jiva and Brahman, man and God,
Ghosts and wraiths and spirits all,
Devas, beasts, birds, insects and worms,
This Love dwells in the heart of all.
Say, who else is the of God gods?
Say, who moves all?
The mother dies for her young,
The robber robs!
——The impulse of Love!!

Beyond the ken of speech and mind,
It dwells in weal and woe;
It is that which comes,
As the all-powerful, all-destroyer Kali,
And as the mother.

Disease, bereavement, the pinch of poverty,
Virtue and vice,
The results of actions good and bad,
All are but IT's worship:
Say, what does a Jiva do?

Deluded is he, who pleasure seeks,
Lunatic he who misery wishes,
Mad he too who longs for death,
Immortality—vain desire.

Far, however far you go,
Mounted on the mental car,
It's the same ocean of world,
Joy and woe whirling on.

Listen, bird, devoid of wings,
It's not the way to escape;
Time and again you get blows,
Why then attempt the impossible?

Let go knowledge,
Prayers, offerings and strength,
For Love self-less is the sole resource;
Lo, the insect teaches,
By embracing the flame.

Base insect,
Blinded, by beauty charmed,
Your soul is drunk with Love ;
O Lover,
Cast into the fire thy dross of self.
Say,
Comes happiness ever to a beggar ?
What good, being object of charity ?
Give away, nor ask in return,!
Should there be wealth in the heart.

Heir to the Infinite thou art,
In the heart is the ocean of Love,
" Give," " Give,"—whoever asks back,
His ocean dwindles to a drop.

From Brahman to the worm,
And the atom minute,
Everywhere is the same All-Love ;
Do, friend, offer
Mind, soul, body at their feet.

His mainfold forms before thee
Leaving, where seekest for God ?
Who loves all beings,
He serves his God.

——:o:——

THE HYMN OF CREATION.

Rendered from a Bengali song composed by the Swami.

—:o:—

One mass,
Devoid of form, name and colour,
Timeless, devoid of past and future,
Spaceless, devoid of all,
Where rests hushed
Even speech of negation,*
Voiceless.

From thence,
Floweth the river causal,
In the form of desire radiant,
Its waters angrily roaring
The constant roar,
"I am," "I am."

In that ocean,
Of desire limitless,
Appear waves, countless, infinite,
Of what forms diverse,
Of what power manifold,
Of what repose,
Of what movements varied,
Who can tell?

*** "*Neti, Neti,*" "not this, not this," Brahman cannot be described in any other way.**

Million moons, million suns,
Springing from that ocean,
Rushing with din tumultuous,
Covered the firmament,
Drowning the points of heaven,
In light effulgent.

In it
Live what beings,
Dull and quick, unnumbered,
Pleasure and pain,
Disease, birth and death!
The sun He is,
His the ray,
(Nay) the sun is He,
And He the ray.

"AND LET SHYAMA DANCE THERE."

Rendered from a Bengali Poem by the Swami.

——:o:——

Beauteous blossoms ravishing with perfume,
Swarms of maddened bees buzzing around;
The silver moon—a shower of smile,
Which dwellers of heaven
Smile upon the homes of earth;
The soft south-wind, whose magic touch
Ope's memory's folds;
Rivers and brooks, rippling lakes
With Bhramaras * wheeling
Round waving lotuses unnumbered;
Foaming cascades—a streaming music—
To which echo mountain caves.
Warblers, full of melody,
Hidden in leaves, love discourse;
The rising orb, the painter divine,
With golden brush but lightly touches
The canvas earth,
A wealth of colours floods the ground
—A museum of hues—
Waking up a sea of sentiments.

The roll of thunder, the crash of clouds.
The war of elements covering earth and sky;
Darkness vomiting darkness,
The Pralaya † wind angrily roaring;
In bursts, flashes the blood-red, terrific lightning

---

* A beetle somewhat like a bumble-bee, which lives solely on honey.

† The time of cosmic destruction.

Monster waves, thundering, foaming,
Rush to leap mountain peaks ;
The earth booms furious, reels,
Sinks down, hurled from its place ;
Piercing the ground, stream forth flames,
And mighty ranges blow up into atoms.

A lovely villa, on a lake of blue—
Festooned with water-lilies ;
The heart-blood of grapes
Capped with white foam
Whispering softly ;
The melody of the harp floods the ears,
Growing desire, by its air ; time and harmony rich :
What stirring of emotions !
How many hot sighs of love !
And tears coursing down !
The red lips of the youthful fair,
The two blue eyes—two oceans of feeling ;
The two hands eager to advance
—Love's cage—
In which the heart lies captive.

The martial music bursts,
The ground shakes under the warrior's tread ;
The roar of cannon, the rattle of guns,
Volumes of smoke, the gruesome battle-field ;
The thundering artillery vomiting fire :
Shells burst and blow up
Elephants and horses mounted.

The earth trembles ;
A million cavalry charge,
And capture the enemy's ordnance,
Piercing through the smoke and the shower of shells

And the rain of bullets;
Forward goes the flag
—The emblem of victory—
With blood streaming down the staff,
Followed by the rifles, drunk with war-spirit;
Lo! the ensign falls, but the flag advances
On the shoulder of another;
Under his feet swell heaps of the slain,
But he falters not.

The flesh craves for pleasure,
The senses for sweet strains of song,
The mind for peals of laughter,
The heart pants to reach beyond sorrow;
Who cares exchange the soothing moonlight
For the burning rays of the noontide sun?
The wretch with a scorching heart
—Even he loves the sweet moon;
All thirst for joy,
Breathes there the wretch
Who hugs sorrow to his bosom?
Misery in his cup of happiness
Venom in that of nectar,
Poison in his throat,
Yet he clings to hope.
All are scared by the Terrific,
But none seek Elokeshi* Whose form is Death.
The frightful sword, reeking with blood,
They take from Her hand, and put a lute instead!
Thou Kali, the All-destroyer. Thou alone art True,
The pleasant Vanamali† is Thy shadow's shadow.

---

* She with untied hair, a name of Kali.

† Literally, He garlanded with wild flowers. The shepherd Krishna in His aspect of youthful sport.

Terrible Mother, cut the core,
Illusion dispel—the dream of happiness,
The fondness for the flesh.
True, they garland Thee with scalps,
But shrink back in fright
And call Thee All-merciful
At Thy thunder peal of laughter,
At Thy nudeness uncovered as space,
Their hearts cower, but they say
" It is the demons that the Mother kills "!
They pretend they wish to see Thee
But at Thy sight, they flee.
Thou art Death,
Thou distributest plague and disease
—Vessels of venom filled by thine own hands—
To each and all.
You insane! cheating yourself,
You turn not your head
Lest you see the Mother Terrible.
You court hardship in the hope of happiness,
You put on the cloak of devotion and worship
To achieve your selfish ends.
The blood from the severed head of a kid
Fills thee with fear—
Your heart throbs at the sight—
A coward! Compassionate? *
A strange state of things! Who will see the truth?
Break the harp, free thyself
From the mighty attraction—the wine of love, the charm of sex,
Forward, with the ocean's cry!

* The idea is that the brave alone can be compassionate, and not the coward.

Tears thy drink pledge life,—let the body fall.
Hero, awake! Shake off thy dreams,
Death stands at thy head,
Does fear become thee?
A load of misery,—this Becoming * know this
To be thy God!
His temple, amoung corpses and the funeral pyres;
Unending battle. His worship, and constant defeat,
Let that not unnerve thee;
Shattered be self, hope and name,
Make thy heart a burning-ground,
And let Shyama † dance there.

---

* The wheel of constant birth and death, hence the World.
† The Dark One, Kali.

——:o:——

TO THE AWAKENED INDIA.*

Once more awake!
For sleep it was, not death, to bring thee life
Anew, and rest to lotus-eyes, for visions
Daring yet. The world in need awaits, O Truth!
No death for thee!

Resume thy march
With gentle feet that would not break the
Peaceful rest, even of the road-side dust
That lies so low. Yet strong and steady,
Blissful, bold and free. Awakener ever
Forward! Speak thy stirring words.

Thy home is gone
Where loving hearts had brought thee up, and
Watched with joy thy growth. But Fate is strong
This the law,—all things come back to the source
Their strength to renew.

Then start afresh
From the land of thy birth, where vast cloud-belted
Snows do bless and put their strength in thee,
For working wonders anew. The heavenly
River tunes thy voice to her own immortal song;
Deodar shades give thee eternal peace.

---

* From the "Prabuddha Bharata."

And all above,
Himala's daughter Uma, gentle, pure,
The Mother that resides in all as Power
And Life, Who works all works, and
Makes of one the world. Whose mercy
Opes the gate to Truth, and shows
The One in All, gives thee untiring
Strength, which leads to Infinite Love.

They bless thee all,
The seers great whom age nor clime
Can claim their own, the fathers of the
Race, who felt the heart of Truth the same,
And bravely taught to man ill-voiced or
Well. Their servant, thou hast got
The secret,—'tis but One.

Then speak, O Love!——
Before thy gentle voice serene, behold how
Visions melt, and fold after fold of dreams
Departs to void, till Truth and Truth alone,
In all its glory shines,—

And tell the world—
Awake, arise, dream no more!
This is the land of dreams, where Karma
Weaves unthreaded garlands with our thoughts,
Of flowers sweet or noxious,—and none
Has root or stem, being born in naught, which
The softest breath of Truth drives back to
Primal nothingness. Be bold, and face
The Truth! Be one with it! Let visions cease
Or, if you cannot, dream then truer dreams,
Which are Eternal Love and Service Free.

KALI THE MOTHER.

The stars are blotted out,
        The clouds are covering clouds,
It is darkness vibrant, sonant.
        In the roaring, whirling wind
Are the souls of a million lunatics,—
        Just loose from the prison house,—
Wrenching trees by the roots,
        Sweeping all from the path.
The sea has joined the fray,
        And swirls up mountain-waves,
To reach the pitchy sky.
        The flash of lurid light
Reveals on every side
        A thousand, thousand shades
Of Death begrimed and black—
        Scattering plagues and sorrows,
Dancing mad with joy.
                Come, Mother, come!

For Terror is Thy name,
        Death is in Thy breath.
And every shaking step
        Destroys a world for e'er.
Thou 'Time' the All-Destroyer!
                Come, O Mother, come!

Who dares misery love,
        And hug the form of Death,
Dance in Destruction's dance,
                To him the Mother comes.

——:o:——

HOLD ON YET A WHILE, BRAVE HEART.*

If the sun by the cloud is hidden a bit,
If the welkin shows but gloom,
Still hold on yet a while, brave heart,
The victory is sure to come.

No winter was but summer came behind,
Each hollow crests the wave,
They push each other in light and shade ;
Be steady then and brave.

The duties of life are sore indeed,
And its pleasures fleeting, vain,
The goal so shadowy seems and dim,
Yet plod on through the dark, brave heart,
With all thy might and main.

Not a work will be lost, no struggle vain,
Though hopes be blighted, powers gone ;
Of thy loins shall come the heirs to all,
Then hold on yet a while, brave soul,
No good is e'er undone.

Though the good and the wise in life are few,
Yet theirs are the reins to lead,
The masses know but late the worth ;
Heed none and gently guide.

With thee are those who see afar,
With thee is the Lord of might,
All blessings pour on thee, great soul,
To thee may all come right.

---

* Written to H.H The Maharajah of Khetri, Rajputana.

NIRVANASHATKAM, OR SIX STANZAS ON NIRVANA.*

I am neither the mind, nor the intellect, nor the ego, nor the mind-stuff;
I am neither the body, nor the changes of the body;
I am neither the senses of hearing, taste, smell or sight,
Nor am I the ether, the earth, the fire, the air;
I am Existence Absolute, Knowledge Absolute, Bliss Absolute;—
I am He, I am He. (*Shivoham, Shivoham*).

I am neither the Prana, nor the five vital airs;
I am neither the materials of the body, nor the five sheaths;
Neither am I the organs of action, nor object of the senses;
I am Existence Absolute, Knowledge Absolute, Bliss Absolute;—
I am He, I am He. (*Shivoham, Shivoham*).

I have neither aversion nor attachment, neither greed nor delusion;
Neither egotism, nor envy, neither Dharma nor Moksha;
I am neither desire, nor objects of desire,
I am Existence Absolute, Knowledge Absolute, Bliss [Absolute;—
I am He, I am He. (*Shivoham, Shivoham*).

I am neither sin nor virtue, neither pleasure nor pain;
Nor Temple nor worship, nor pilgrimage nor Scriptures.
Neither the act of enjoying, the enjoyable nor the enjoyer;
I am Existence Absolute, Knowledge Absolute, Bliss [Absolute;—
I am He, I am He. (*Shivoham, Shivoham*).

* A poem of Sankaracharya, translated by Swami Vivekananda.

I have neither death, nor fear of death nor caste;
Nor was I ever born, nor had I parents, friends and [relations;
I have neither Guru nor disciple;
I am Existence Absolute, Knowledge Absolute, Bliss [Absolute;—
I am He, I am He. *(Shivoham, Shivoham).*

I am untouched by the senses, I am neither Mukti nor [Knowable;
I am without form, without limit, beyond space, beyond [time;
I am in everything; I am the basis of the universe [everywhere am I;
I am Existence Absolute, Knowledge Absolute, Bliss [Absolute;—
I am He, I am He. *(Shivoham, Shivoham).*

——: o :——

A HYMN TO THE DIVINITY OF SRI RAMAKRISHNA.

(*Rendered from a Bengali song composed by Swami Vivekananda.*)

We salute Thee !
Lord ! Adored of the world ;
Samsâra's bondage breaker ; taintless Thou ;
Embodiment of blessed qualities ;
Thou transcendest all Gunas ; human form
Thou bearest.
Thee we salute and adore !

Refuge of mind and speech, Thou art beyond
The reach of either. Radiance art thou
In all radiance that is. The heart's cave
Is by Thy visitance resplendent made.
Verily Thou art that which dispelleth
The densest darkness of Tamas in man.

Lo ! In variety of melody
Forth-breaking in fine harmony most sweet,
Hymns of Thy devotees, accompanied
By Mridanga* playing with music's grace,
Fill the air, in evening worship to Thee.

One glancing vision at Thine eyes divine
Cleared by the collyrium of Jnâna
Defies delusion. O Thou blotter-out

* A kind of drum.

Of all the taints of sin; Intelligence
Pure, unmingled, is Thy form. Of the world
Thou art embellisher. Self-luminous
Art Thou. O Ocean of feeling sublime
And of Love Divine! O God-maddened One,
Devotees win Thy blessed feet, and cross
Safely the swelling sea of Samsàra.

O Lord of the world, through Thy Yoga power
Thou shinest as the Incarnation clear
Of this our time. O Thou of strict restraint,
Only through Thine unstinted grace we see
The mind in Samâdhi completely merged;
Mercy Incarnate! austere are Thy deeds.

Thou dealest to the din of Misery
Destruction. Kali's binding cords
Are cut by Thee asunder. Thine own life
Thou gavest freely, O sweet Sacrifice,
O best of men! O Saviour of the world!

Devoid wert Thou of the idea of sex,
Thought of possession charmed Thee not. To Thee
Obnoxious was all pleasure. Give to us,
O greatest among Tyágis,* love intense
Unto Thy sacred feet; give, we implore!

Fearless art Thou, and past all gloom of doubt;
Thy mind is wrapt in its own firm resolve;
Thy lovers, whose devotion mounts above
The realm of reason; who renounce the pride
Of caste and parentage, of name and fame;—
Their safe refuge art Thou alone, O Lord!

* Renouncers.

My one true treasure is Thy blessed feet,
Reaching which the whole universe itself
Seems like a puddle in the hollow made
By hoof of passing cow.
O offering
To Love! O Seer of equality
In all! O verily, in Thee the pain
And evil of this mortal world escapes,
And vanishes, O cherished One, in Thee!

THE HYMN OF SAMADHI.

(Rendered from a Bengali song composed by Swami Vivekananda.)

Lo! The sun is not, nor the comely moon,
All light extinct; in the great void of space
Floats shadow-like the image-universe.

In the void of mind involute, there floats
The fleeting universe, rises and floats,
Sinks again, ceaseless, in the current "I."

Slowly, slowly, the shadow-multitude
Entered the primal womb, and flowed ceaseless,
The only current, the "I am," "I am."

Lo! 'Tis stopped, ev'n that current flows no more,
Void merged into void,—beyond speech and mind!
Whose heart understands, he verily does.

——:0:——

ANGELS UNAWARES.*

I.

One bending low with load—of life
That meant no joy, but suffering harsh and hard,—
And wending on his way through dark and dismal paths,
Without a flash of light from brain or heart
To give a moment's cheer,—till the line
That marks out pain from pleasure, death from life
And good from what is evil, was well-nigh wiped from
[sight,—
Saw, one blessed night, a faint but beautiful ray of light
Descend to him. He knew not what or wherefrom,
But called it God and worshipped.
Hope, an utter stranger, came to him, and spread
Through all his parts, and life to him meant more
Than he could ever dream, and covered all he knew,
Nay, peeped beyond his world. The Sages
Winked, and smiled, and called it "superstition."
But he did feel its power and peace
And gently answered back,—
"O Blessed Superstition!"

II

One drunk with wine of wealth and power
And health to enjoy them both, whirled on
His maddening course,—till the earth (he thought
Was made for him, his pleasure-garden, and man,
The crawling worm, was made to find him sport),

---

* Written in November, 1898.

Till the thousand lights of joy,—with pleasure fed,
That flickered day and night before his eyes,
With constant change of colours,—began to blur
His sight, and cloy his senses; till selfishness,
Like a horny growth, had spread all o'er his heart;
And pleasure meant to him no more than pain,—
Bereft of feeling; and life in the sense,
So joyful, precious once, a rotting corpse between his arms,
(Which he forsooth would shun, but more he tried, the more
It clung to him; and wished, with frenzied brain,
A thousand forms of death, but quailed before the charm).
Then sorrow came,—and Wealth and Power went,—
And made him kinship find with all the human race
In groans and tears, and though his friends would laugh,
His lips would speak in grateful accents,—

"O Blessed Misery!"

III

One born with healthy frame,—but not of will
That can resist emotions deep and strong,
Nor impulse throw, surcharged with potent strength,—
And just the sort that pass as good and kind,
Beheld that *he* was safe, whilst others long
And vain did struggle 'gainst the surging waves.
Till, morbid grown, his mind could see,—like flies
That seek the putrid part,—but what was bad.
Then Fortune smiled on him, and his foot slipped.
That ope'd his eyes for e'er, and made him find
That stones and trees ne'er break the law,
But stones and trees remain; that man alone
Is blest with power to fight and conquer Fate,
Transcending bounds and laws.

From him his passive nature fell, and life appeared
As broad and new, and broader, newer grew,
Till light ahead began to break, and glimpse of That
Where Peace Eternal dwells,—yet one can only reach
By wading through the sea of struggles,—courage-giving
[came.

Then, looking back on all that made him kin
To stocks and stones, and on to what the world
Had shunned him for, his fall, he blessed the fall,
And, with a joyful heart, declared it—
"Blessed Sin!"

—:o:—

REQUIESCAT IN PACE.*

Speed forth, O Soul! upon thy star-strewn path;
Speed, blissful one! where thought is ever free,
Where time and space no longer mist the view,
Eternal peace and blessings be with thee!

Thy service true, complete thy sacrifice,
Thy home the heart of love transcendent find;
Remembrance sweet, that kills all space and time,
Like altar roses fill thy place behind!

Thy bonds are broke, thy quest in bliss is found,
And one with That which comes as Death and Life;
Thou helpful one! unselfish e'er on earth,
Ahead! still help with love this world of strife!

* Written in memoriam to J. J. Goodwin, August, 1898.

—:o:—

PEACE.*

Behold, it comes in might
The power that is not power,
The light that is in darkness,
The shade in dazzling light.

It is joy that never spoke,
And grief unfelt, profound,
Immortal life unlived,
Eternal death unmourned.

It is not joy nor sorrow,
But that which is between,
It is not night nor morrow,
But that which joins them in.

It is sweet rest in music;
And pause in sacred art;
The silence between speaking;
Between two fits of passion—
It is the calm of heart.

It is beauty never seen,
And love that stands alone,
It is song that lives un-sung,
And knowledge never known.

It is death between two lives,
And lull between two storms,
The void whence rose creation,
And that where it returns.

To it the tear-drop goes,
To spread the smiling form.
It is the Goal of Life,—
And Peace—its only home!

---

* Composed at Ridgeley Manor, New York, 1899.